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PLEASURE.

A Poem,

IN SEVEN BOOKS.

BY

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"RUINS OF MANY LANDS," "SPIRITS OF THE PAST,"

"THE POETRY OF CREATION," ETC.



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PREFACE.



To trace the various sources whence, in the present life, we derive pleasure, is a task, it will readily be admitted, replete with interest.

No virtuous man lives entirely for enjoyment, and yet no wise one would be altogether debarred from it.

The Stoic and the Epicurean, by hurrying to the extremes of rigour and of laxity, have mutually committed errors. To thwart the instincts of Nature on the one hand, and, on the other, to give a loose rein to the wild steeds of our passions, are acts that evince an equal degree of folly.

What is pleasure? The question is by no means easily answered, for the objects and pursuits producing pleasurable sensations, in respective individuals, vary with their education, temperament, and tastes. Thus, one man will experience exquisite delight in the survey of works of art: another, indifferent to painting and sculpture, receives high gratification from music: the mind of a third, embracing the study of astronomy, history, or philosophy, finds pleasure in profound thought: while a fourth, from some strange perversion of the finer intellectual powers, turns coldly away from all these sources of exalted enjoyment, and seeks delight in aimless and frivolous pastimes, and frequently in intoxication and debauchery.

It is evident, therefore, that every individual, to a certain extent, will entertain his own peculiar opinion, when called on to give a definition of pleasure.

In the following poem, it is proposed less to

examine the reasons why certain objects cause sensations of delight, than to consider at once the Pleasures themselves. Pictures are presented illustrative of their character, and of their debasing or ennobling effects on the mind. The pleasure which a Napoleon derived from his victories, and a Lord Chesterfield from the fashionable frivolities of life : the pleasure which filled the hearts of a Raphael, a Milton, and a Haydn, during the composition of some immortal work of genius ; and the sweet sense of happiness overflowing the bosom of the lover, or the devotee worshipping at the shrine of Nature, may seem, comparatively, very different emotions : nevertheless they are to be regarded in the light of pleasures, and, as such, are referred to in the ensuing pages.

Commencing with the delight we experience from a contemplation of beautiful and sublime scenes in Nature, the Poem treats of the pleasures indulged in by various races, at different periods of history ; the pleasures in relation to the fine arts—

to our actions in life—our pursuits, and, more than all, our passions ; closing with the graver consideration of the pleasure that fills the exalted mind anticipating immortality, and a nearer commune with that universe, whose magnificence and glory are now but dimly comprehended.

PLEASURE.



BOOK I.

PLEASURE DERIVED FROM THE SURVEY OF NATURAL
OBJECTS, AND THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE
MATERIAL UNIVERSE.

PLEASURE.



BOOK I.

PROUD heir of Heaven ! poor insect of an hour !
Mortal, immortal—weak, endued with power,
Behold the' enigma man ! his strange career
Sweeps on in darkness and in sunshine here.
Dull in great thoughts, in little how acute !
He soars a god—now grovels with the brute.
He toils, but idly toils ; Oblivion's hand
Blots out his works—slight figures stamp'd on sand.
Vain his hopes burn, his glory-bubbles rise,
He greatly schemes, but as he schemes he dies ;
One moment seen, then gone ; so, darkly pass
Quick flying cloud-shades o'er the summer grass.
As this small globe to all the mighty spheres,
Such his brief life-point to eternal years.
What can he boast, fast chained by fate below,
Gnawed, like Prometheus, by a vulture—Woe ?

What can he boast, plumed Wisdom's highest flight
Pursued through mists of doubt, and error's night ;
The melancholy truth made clear alone,
That light is veiled, truth's glories half unknown ?
Oh ! weep for man, but most lament his pride ;
This Heaven condemns—this, this the fiends deride !

Yet, spite of ills that hedge his being round,
For suffering man, love, mercy, still are found.
His spirit, buoyant, springs beneath the load,
Some flowers make gay his sterile, rocky road ;
And Pleasure's wells, when hottest beams oppress,
Gushing and cool, rejoice life's wilderness.
Aye, man, whate'er his lot, will pleasure crave,
The' instinctive longing haunts him to the grave.

This warm desire for joys that Earth bestows,
The earliest plant in Passion's garden grows.
Like a coy violet purpling Spring's young bower,
Its blooms unfold in childhood's hopeful hour ;
A tulip's gaudier form, in youth it wears,
A loftier flower the plant in manhood bears,
Distilling from its petals dangerous dew—
A precious balm, a deadly poison too ;
And in gray age, when soberer beams fall round,
Like modest mountain-heath, it decks the ground.

Nature! thou source of pleasure pure and free,
The heart, with filial throb, first turns to thee ;
For thou art our loved parent ; from thy breast
We sprang to light, and there at last must rest,
Though God-breathed soul, whose ardours nought shall
 chill,
May range thy charms, and drink thy glories still.

When Power divine threw Beauty's varied robe,
Woven by angels, 'round our new-made globe,
Gave plant and herb to deck the naked plain,
The palm-green isle to cheer the lonely main ;
Told where the stream its silvery line should lead
Through snow-lipped lilies, and the whispering reed ;
Poured down romantic rocks the water's glass,
And edged with spiky firs the mountain-pass ;
Reared the high pillar-hills, on which, serene,
Heaven's mighty palace-roof, outstretched should lean,
Its blue magnificence by day so bright,
And hung with golden lamps, each solemn night—
Were all for use alone ? that favoured man
Might run with easier course life's destined span ?
Drink the pure stream, and sow his bounteous field,
Luxuriate in the fruits the seasons yield ?
Bask in the sun, or saunter in the shade,
No loftier feeling to his soul conveyed,

His grovelling pleasures, like his petty pains,
Bound to dull sense by adamantine chains ?

Oh ! no ; Heaven bade Creation's glories shine,
To touch, delight, to raise, and to refine :
For want's poor cravings, plann'd a God alone,
Why around all things beauty's magic thrown ?
Why paint the flower, or shape to grace the tree,
Give green to earth, and azure to the sea ;
With gold and roses roof Morn's freshening skies,
And flush for Eve a purple paradise ?
More dull, more plain, Creation's face had spread,
From flowerless vale to sombre mountain-head ;
Our needs supplied, kind Heaven had done its part,
Nor charmed the' aspiring soul, nor warmed the heart.

But God, through Nature, speaking from above,
Hath stamp'd on yielding earth, grace, beauty, love ;
And these, to soul appealing, fan the blaze
Of Taste's rich fire, and purest rapture raise.
The heart responds to each fair form around,
Dwells on a hue, and lingers on a sound ;
For types of qualities—the sweet, serene,
The bold, the tender—live in every scene.
The valley pictures modesty ; the stream
Sets forth the glitter of life's restless dream ;

The virgin flower of innocence doth speak,
Ambition's image, the dark mountain-peak ;
The lucid dews that bathe Day's opening eye
Seem Sorrow's tears, Eve's breath Love's balmy sigh.
Above, below, there burns a life intense,
And all we win from soul, or feel through sense,
Comes echoed back as warm, as bright, as fair,
From sympathetic earth, and peopled air.

Yet varied scenes move varied trains of thought,
Each with its own deep feeling, pleasure, fraught.
If placid beauty thou thy study make,
Go, trace Killarney's mountain-girded lake.
When heaven is calm, and not a filmy cloud
Hangs dense enough to weave a fairy's shroud,
And Glenna lifts his brow, with forests dun,
And streamy vales laugh coyly in the sun ;
That fair, enchanted scene shall bless the eye,
And wake exalted rapture's tenderest sigh.
Blue as blue heaven, the liquid plain lies still,
And spreads its living glass from hill to hill ;
Each isle its double sees, each insect flings
A quivering picture of its rainbow-wings ;
Each wavelet, while we look, gives back impressed
The sun's round glory from its burnished breast.

Down the steep mount, the poplar, ash, and beech,
Sweeping close-grouped, the mirroring crystal reach ;
And as soft airs pulse by, a sound is made,
Faint, rustling, deep, as all the forests prayed.
See where yon cottage, bird-like, dots the cliff !
While, trailing silver, glides the fisher's skiff ;
Each dip the light oar makes just raises curls,
Now throws against the sun a sheet of pearls.
Where alders fill the green retiring dell,
In leaf-wove homes the feathered people dwell,
And oft, amid the calm, their notes ye hear, *
Across the beam-paved waters swelling clear—
A meaning language, that sweet voice of theirs,
Telling their happy loves, and sylvan cares.
Far off, strong castles rear their towers of pride,
And moss-robed ruins skirt the shadowed tide—
Bare, roofless dwellings, owls their tenants now,
And abbeys doomed, like meaner wrecks, to bow ;
Pillar and wall close-clasped by ivy-arms,
Old yews still watching round their reverend charms.*

The white cascade in stars of silver falls ;
Sure o'er that dashing flood some Genius calls,

* The picturesque ruins of Mucross Abbey stand near the village of Cloghreen ; and some remains of a once celebrated monastery are still visible in the beautiful Island of Innisfallen.

Winnowing with viewless wings the feathery spray,
Or teaching sunbows 'round its foam to play.
List! As the bell strikes deep in yon far tower,
Giving the eternal past another hour—
The infant of the mighty giant, Time,
Just born, but dying in that solemn chime—
Slow down the shore the sound of warning swings;
The rock replies, the elfin grotto rings;
But chief it lingers 'round the Eagle's Nest,*
Where echo, waked, seems loath again to rest;
Up the tall mount the sound increasing swells,
As if not one, there rang a hundred bells;
Then down it drops, in softest music-showers,
Like seraph voices breathed from skyey bowers.
As faints the note around, the distant hill
Takes up the echo—answering, doubling still:
More tremulous now, a whisper e'en it grows,
Sinks to a thread, like harp-strain's quivering close;
Swell once again, re-issuing from some cave,
Moans through the hills, and dies along the wave.†

* The Eagle's Nest is a precipitous rock, midway between the Upper and Lower Lakes, rising to the height of eleven hundred feet.

† The celebrated echo at the Eagle's Nest has the peculiarity of multiplying sounds a hundred—apparently, a thousand—times; and not only the horn, or a shout, awakens all the echoes of the hills, but the clapping of the hand, almost a spoken word, will be many and many times repeated.

Such scene will ever ravish tasteful Mind,
And yield a pleasure lofty as refined ;
Will lull the passions by its holy calm,
And breathe on sorrow's wound assuasive balm.
But stronger feelings, richer fancies rise,
When great remembrances, whose spell ne'er dies—
Flowers of the past, which spirit loves to cull—
Throw their enchantment o'er the beautiful.
Thus Tempé, with its pines and classic stream,
The haunt of gods, the poet's glowing theme ;
Alba's brown groves, and Anio's storied shore,
Where warriors rested, sages dreamt of yore ;
That laurell'd Mount* which world-famed ashes keeps,
Where genius o'er a Maro bends and weeps ;
The Sabine hills, where Horace plied the spade,
And Como's lake, where glides a Pliny's shade,
Chain the slow step, and raise within the soul
A fervour reason's calm may scarce contról.
Scenes lovelier far we less admire, revere,
For lore and glory weave bright halos here.

This magic, too, a nameless charm bestows
On that famed vale, where liliated Sorgia flows ;
Warm pleasure thrills the enthusiast roaming there,
Rocks more romantic look, and flowers more fair,

* Mount Posillipo, near Naples.

For Love his sorcery blends with all around—
The pensile trees, the fount's grief-voicing sound,
Yields to the fruited bough a deeper bloom,
Glow in the sunshine, sorrows in the gloom.
There, as meek Eve descends o'er still Vaucluse,
And, steeping her soft brush in amber hues,
Paints—heavenly artist!—all the gorgeous West
With spires of gold and bowers of fairy rest,
With crags of torrid glory, and red isles,
That richer burn, as sunset deeper smiles,
Fancy beholds Petrarca wandering slow,
Murmuring despairing sighs to breezes low ;
While every grot, moss'd bank, and dusky glade,
Seems haunted by his musing, restless shade !—
Who sails on Leman's blue, nor turns his eyes
From Alpine pomp, and earth's sweet paradise,
To rest on Chillon's walls all drear and bare,
For martyrs prayed, and, praying, perished there ?
Nor feels a glow that passeth mere delight,
As calm Lausanne's grey villas court his sight,
Where Wisdom's son,* though towering thought
supplied
No hopeful creed, his mighty labours plied ;
Snatched, from the altar of departed days,
A torch down Time's cimmerian walks to blaze,

* Gibbon.

Giving Rome light when living light was o'er,
And gilding his own name for evermore.

Thus, too, we burn by Avon's poplar'd wave,
Where Fame her trumpet blows o'er Shakspeare's
grave,
Feel solemn calm in Witham's shady dell,
Where Newton seems with Nature's God to dwell,
And listen, ravished, Newstead's groves among,
To Byron's lofty, spirit-searching song.

A pleasure flashes deep to feeling's seat,
Gentle yet heart-o'erpowering, sad yet sweet ;
Its spells we own, when turning to survey
Scenes loved, admired, in years long rolled away.

Bright river of my boyhood ! wandering still
By cavern'd rock, and bosky, haunted hill ;
Thrones may down topple, die each noble name,
Plague, war, sweep earth, thou bubblest on the same,
Morn flushing o'er thee, evening fading dim,
Trees, walls of verdure, by thy silver brim ;
E'en changeless as the stars, that nightly view
Their pearly foreheads in thy glass of blue ;
How warms the bosom, when thy calm, green shore,
Like some long-parted friend, I hail once more !

Romantic Fal! sweet Arno of our isle!
Where woods, like Vallombrosa's, wave and smile,
And villas whiten by thine arrowy tide,
And ruined church-towers lift their ivied pride;
Here as I view thy sky-pure, dreamy wave,
Climb the shell'd bank, or tread the twilight cave,
Or watch the birds that o'er thy crystal dart,
What untombed memories crowd the musing heart!
That wood recalls the time when, free and blest,
I plucked the glossy nut, or sought the nest;
Those jutting crags which, black with ages, lower,
Have seen me bend the long, long, patient hour,
Snaring the bright-scaled darter, prouder far,
And happier, too, than blood-stained chiefs of war.
Oh! pictures blest, that bring those halcyon days
Back to the soul, and dreams elysian raise!
Scenes, whose fresh beauty time shall ne'er destroy!
'Tis yours to wake a visionary joy,
Beyond all bliss for which earth's strugglers live,
That gold commands, or honour's meed can give.
What are the brightest hours that shine for age,
As slow we tread our dusty pilgrimage?
Truth hearses fancy, all the heart's pure green,
Faded and seared, just tells where Spring had been;
By lassitude too oft we sink oppressed,
And turn from action's whirl, and sigh for rest;

The soul's elastic bound, gay dreams, are o'er,
And Hope, as once she lured, can lure no more :
What, then, remains? benignant God, declare !
Hath manhood no high views or joys to share ?
Shall mind, truth's noble prize, aspiring thought,
And the starr'd universe, be held as nought ?—
No, while this brain can muse on life and man,
This eye the glorious page of Nature scan,
This soul hope seats beyond time's clouds of woe,
Pleasure's warm fountains ne'er shall cease to flow.

Prisoner of cities ! wrapp'd in vapours dun,
Where gales creep poisoned, sicklied hangs the sun—
Who linkest year to year, a rustying chain,
No hope but petty power, no joy but gain ;
Oh ! quit man's works awhile ; consent to trace
The works of God in Nature's unveiled face ;
Spurn the dull scene where Mammon's votaries hold
Their grovelling court, and sell their souls for gold.

Stand on this breezy hill, where ruddy Health
Bares her young brow, and Spring her floral wealth
Throws prodigal on Earth's green lap, and laughs,
Warmed by the honied dew's her red lip quaffs.
Front the West's mouth, that breathes so blandly calm,
Lips musky sweet, whose every sigh is balm.

Drink that pure wine—the cool and odorous gale,
Till thy sunk eyes look bright, thy cheek less pale !
Ah ! richest cordial this, to cheer, inspire,
Beyond man's art-distilled, foul liquid fire.
Gaze in the glen beneath, where flags throw up
Their plummy heads, and many a lily's cup
Holds nectar for the bee that comes each morn,
And sounds, for grateful joy, her small shrill horn.
Trace through its sapphire windings yon quick stream,
Here dun in shade, there glossy in the beam,
The valley's blessing, hymning as it flows,
Where fairies steal to bathe at daylight's close.
Hark ! from the hill, against the jocund breeze
Lifting broad shoulders, mantled o'er with trees,
The piping song of countless throats is heard,
Fresh from small hearts by gushing rapture stirred ;
While sounds between, plunged headlong from some tall
And pine-hung rock, the bright-bowed waterfall—
The waterfall that shoots and spreads in air,
Bursting in foam, a starry glory there.

See, on this plain a myriad flowrets bloom !
Sure it is bliss for sight long pent in gloom,
To mark their sky-wove dress of countless dyes,
Surpassing all Art paints, or pomp supplies.

The heath-bell, with its small pink globe that rings
Gay peals for elves, when Eve their frolic brings ;
The gorse that looks like flame on earth's green breast,
Or splash of sunset from the blood-red West ;
The wind-flower proud, as breezes o'er it steal,
Its shimmering, bright-starr'd mantle to reveal ;
The cowslip formed Morn's dewy wine to hold ;
The mottled daisy's breast, half snow, half gold ;
Yon wilding rose, so beautiful yet meek,
Pallidly pink, like love-lorn maiden's cheek ;
The early poppy with its crimson crown,
Flaunting in pride, and gazing scornful down :
The violet opening coy her sapphire eye,
Peering so modest at the wooing sky—
Oh ! such the beauteous page thou here mayst scan,
A God-writ lesson to the heart of man.

Now, as yon fan-like cloud to showers gives birth,
Cooling all Heaven, and dropping balm on earth,
And breezes round the hawthorn livelier toy,
And birds trill out a clearer song of joy,
Mark in the East, where float the clouds away,
That glory fronting slow-declining day !
It spreads its glittering arch from hill to hill,
Fantastic, grand, and beautifully still.

Hues, gorgeous hues, such canvas never bore—
Hues, meet to tint Heaven's seraph-trodden floor,
Mingle, yet keep apart, like that fine line
Betwixt man's meaner clay and soul divine.
It spans the vales, and deepening, brightening, grows
To one vast bridge, and where the horizon glows,
Stands the refulgent base, but who shall climb
The beam-wove side, and cross the arch sublime?
Oh! Deity hath smiled the wonder there,
Token of peace, and covenant of air!
And framed it beauteous for His angels' feet
To glide along, when, joyously and fleet,
They pass to earth with messages of love,
Or lead back happy souls to courts above.

One vision more, and thou, hard child of gain,
Thus bursting for an hour thy Mammon-chain,
Mayst seek again the scene black vapour shrouds,
That solitude to spirit—busy crowds.

Turn thy charmed eye to flame-tipped western
steeps,
Along whose brim Day's weary chariot sweeps;
His horses' hoofs blaze gold; their half-shut eyes
Shed liquid lustre, mellowing down the skies.

Or Day seems Life upon the hills of fate,
Defending hard his gorgeous castle-gate ;
And Night is Death advancing o'er the scene,
Mournfully stern, and sullenly serene.
Yet Day lifts high his broad and brazen shield,
Defying Night's approach, and scorns to yield ;
And as his armour darts the arrowy rays,
Skies burn above, and hills beneath him blaze :
Clouds, pressing round, the conflict to behold,
Glow on his side, and, glowing, turn to gold.
His fiery splendours, smiles of valour, beam,
Play on the sloping wood, and mazy stream,
Light up wild heaths, and gild the hoary tower,
Quiver on rocks, and warm the orphan flower.
All Nature drinks the farewell, beauteous light,
And basks in joy, ere triumphs strong-armed Night :
He, in his sable robe, with ebon lance,
Fights gravely-firm, with slow but sure advance ;
Pale shines the moon for pity ; one by one,
The stars come forth, to cheer their monarch on.
As Day at length sinks conquered, sure a sigh
Breathes from Earth's heart, and trembles through
the sky ;
The last faint purple speaks the struggle o'er,
The discrowned king of waking hours no more ;

And, darkly beautiful, the prince of Night
Sits girt by stars—his throne the solemn height.

And such is Nature in her lovelier dress,
For ever striving to enchant and bless :
Her glories thrall the soul, and feast the eyes,
Making more pure the good, more wise the wise.
Man by his God was dowered with taste refined,
That beauteous forms might charm, exalt his mind :
No heart so dead but doth at moments own,
Touched by a gorgeous scene, a hue, a tone,
That inborn pulsing, and that chaste delight,
Telling, though veiled by clouds, starr'd soul is bright ;
Telling, though low pursuits debase and chill,
The secret fire, Heaven lit, burns warmly still.

But Nature in her grandeur, stern and rude,
The mighty cataract, voiceless solitude,
The mountain, home of thunder, and the roar,
Eternity's wild hymn, on Ocean's shore,
Wake loftier pleasure, though the humbled sense
Scan with a dread thy works, Omnipotence !—
Why on this life-filled globe, where'er we stray,
Do mysteries awe, and wonders track our way ?
Why fails the flesh to follow soaring mind,
That, too, in Wisdom's race, oft left behind,

Some height beyond, some depth we may not sound,
The clue of marvels sought, but rarely found ?
'Tis to dash pride, to prove our finite state,
That boastful man is weak, but God is great.

Lands of the West ! Earth's Builder gave to ye
The wealth of vastness, charm of majesty ;
Vales spread to kingdoms, streams to oceans swell,
As Heaven meant giants in those wilds should dwell.
All is colossal ; sunless woods embrace
Green, mighty tracts, no foot may ever trace ;
Lakes, wafting fleets, unfold their azure robe,
And sky-crowned mountains girdle half the globe.
Immensity her sceptre stretches here,
And proud Creation claims a wider sphere :
Sure Nature thought our planet huger far,
And deemed she laboured in a lordlier star.
Till race on race the Old World's bounds o'erswept,
Heaven, in reserve, this land of wonders kept :
Now, the great flood-gates burst, the human tide
Rolls on the scene, but still, on every side,
The spreading mass is lost, like drops of rain
Falling on sands, or melting in the main.

We bend our gaze where Andes' Titan forms
Scale heaven anew, and smile at time and storms ;

Or well they seem, those clouds like flags unfurled,
Nature's grand watch-towers, built to guard the world.
Alps were but hillocks by their awful side,
One group surpassing all Helvetia's pride :*
Vast heaven-high walls! where spirits, in their flight,
To rest their pinions, wondering might alight ;
A world of rocks ! a continent of steeps !
Heaved from earth's central caves, where Terror keeps
Her myst'ries and dread secrets ; born of fire,
Yet glassed with thick-ribbed ice, each granite spire ;
Fantastic crowded, where strong earthquake's hand,
A myriad ages since, convulsed the land ;
Now lifted cone-shaped, now with rounded crest,
Like surging waves spells spoke to stony rest ;
Here clefts that seem hell's openings, black with shade,
Where all of Adam born might low be laid,
Earth's gathered race in one deep vault of gloom,
Yet still 'twould yawn, unfilled that hungry tomb.†
Rivals in grandeur, height doth gaze on height,
Proud in their horror, tranquil in their might ;

* The group of Cuzco alone, it is calculated, has an extent of surface three times as large as the whole of Switzerland.

† "The narrow valleys, or fissures, in some of the Andes," observes Humboldt, "are of an extraordinary depth, and fearful character. These rents are clothed with a vigorous vegetation, and in some of them Vesuvius could easily be placed, without much overtopping the sides. The great valleys, called Choto and Cutaco, are 5,000 feet deep."

Storms scourge their feet, around them thunders roar,
Those mountain-kings but look contempt, and soar,
Calm, stern, as conscious of their glory now,
God's finger writing on each awful brow—
That man may read, and, reading, humbled be—
Power, desolation, and eternity!

Oh! fancy bear me to that unreach'd peak,
Where e'en the eagle never whets his beak,
Dread Chimborazo's top! The shrinking eye
Looks at the sun, the snow, and pathless sky;
For nought beside is there. No motion, sound,
Betoken life—cold Death the lord around.
Aye, Death and Solitude, on thrones of fear,
Built for eternal days, sit tyrants here.
Behold yon ice-fields! Glittering floors of glass,
No foot may tempt, the rock-goat dares not pass!
And there they shone, when yonder orient world
The Pharaohs sway'd—his shafts bold Nimrod hurled
And still they'll shine, when Time the earth makes
gray,
Man's works are dust, and empires melt away!
See other heights in lessened glory rise,
Like steps to this—grand temple of the skies!
Sublime elsewhere, and dread, those peaks would be,
Lowering terrific on the humbled sea;

L'Altar, disrupted, torn, and pierced appears,
By fires and earthquakes of ten thousand years.
But when the Summer moon in silver rides
O'er its ice-pinnacles and cloven sides,
Down looking with a smile of tender grace,
Unearthly beauty in her saddened face,
Horrors will soften, ghastly ruins glow,
Delighting eyes that gaze entranced below ;
As if towers, palaces, the gods of air
Had raised in pearl and dazzling crystal there.*

Hark! in the pause, that hollow, stifled roar!
'Tis not from distant waves that lash the shore;
The hidden flame, the demon of unrest,
Fierce burns and chafes in Cotopaxi's breast.
Dread mount! too oft the imprison'd fiends prevail,
Burst from the' abyss, and turn earth's dweller pale,
When sounds, more loud than Heaven's deep thunders
 swell,
And fires stream forth, as poured from gulfs of hell;
When ashes dim the air—black hanging shrouds—
And birds for terror hide them in the clouds,

* "The volcanic mountain l'Altar, in Quito, presents a series of sharp pinnacles and ice-peaks, which, when the setting sun or the moon shines on them, have a magnificent appearance."—*Travels in South America*.

Hills rocking, as the earthquake shivers by,
And o'erturned cities crying horror's cry.*
That mount now sleeps ; the inward roar ye hear
Seems but the giant's breath, and wakes no fear ;
While dazzling snows crest high his peaceful cone,
Pride and a solemn grandeur round him thrown.

Again, glance on—still other mountains soar,
But fancy flags, the spirit asks no more ;
Sublimity o'erpowers, and while it thrills,
Wonder, that mocketh words, the bosom fills.
Away from man, his petty aims and cares,
A higher, mightier field, existence shares ;
Born of the scene, each thought aspires or glows ;
As earth's dread glories widen, soul, too, grows,
And mounts on heaven-plumed pinion from the sod,
Thus left alone, with Nature and her God.
We read, as written with a pen of flame,
On the vast globe, and sky, the' Eternal's name ;
His presence speaks and burns in all things round—
He heaves the hills, and walks the blue profound,

* The volcano of Cotopaxi is the most active and dreaded of all the volcanos in the great chain of the Andes. During the eruption of 1738, the flames rose 3,000 feet above the crater ; and in 1744, the sound of the explosions was heard at the distance of five hundred miles.

Throws on the ice-towers near the gorgeous ray,
Guides the fierce lightning blazing far away,
The moving spirit, the inspiring soul,
Designer, framer, monarch of the whole !

'Tis lofty pleasure in this land to view
The wide, wide prairie, that ne'er culture knew,
But teems with gay, bright flowers—spontaneous birth,
As Heaven's rich floor of stars had dropp'd to earth.
'Tis solemn pleasure in those woods to stand—
Sublime cathedrals raised by Nature's hand ;
Woods that a thousand leagues leaf hill and vale,
Where deep-voiced organs sound in every gale.
'Tis thrilling pleasure, thoughtful to behold,
O'er earth's ploughed breast, wide-dashing Plata rolled ;
Or view, in awful grandeur sweeping on,
Smoothed by the moon, exhaustless Amazon,
Calm through its mighty depths, a moving sky,
A liquid world—bright-faced immensity ;
Flood that bows back old Ocean's azure pride,
Flood that might whelm half Europe 'neath its tide !—
But 'tis a pleasure mixed with nameless dread,
A creeping fear, not all of fancy bred,
When first we mark the feathery clouds of foam,
Rounding from earth, a vast and snowy dome,

And hear the thunder on the shrinking gale,
Hollow and deep, like some lost spirit's wail,
From white Niagara; he pours along,
Than charging hosts more grand, than death more strong,
Laves his steep banks, slow wearing down their wall,
With each dread second, hurrying to the "fall,"
Then o'er the rock leaps flashing into air,
Like some proud god driv'n hell-ward in despair,
Shakes in his agony the sounding shore,
Foams in his rage, and breathes his anguish-roar;
Till battling, madd'ning in the torn abyss,
A boiling Phlegethon where furies hiss,
He yields a sight, to mortals trembling near,
Of beauteous horror and exalting fear.

We stand below the falls; this smooth, broad rock
Is wet with spray, yet safe amidst the shock,
Goat Isle* half hung in air, its cliffs moss-brown,
And tall black pines, all shivering, gazing down,
As though they shrank, but still, by some strong spell,
Would peer below, and watch the torrents swell—
Watch the mad billows plunging, seething white,
The water-flakes thrown out, like tongues of light;

* Goat Island, sweeping to the very crest of the cataract, divides the immense body of waters, but the falls re-unite before they reach the gulf below.

Down, down, in gulfs, where Death and Havoc lay—
Wild, awful gulfs, all thunder and all spray.
Behold ! but speak not, words may rarely be
Interpreters of mind's intensity :
When most we feel, then mutest grows the tongue,
The goddess Silence from pale Wonder sprung.
'Tis not the whirl, the bound of raging waves,
Hurled from above, to dive in earth's deep caves,—
'Tis not the mounting clouds where foam-bows shine,
Like rubies dropping from some sky-deep mine,
While eagles o'er the gulf in terror scream,
To see those waters toss, and boil, and gleam,—
'Tis not the thunderings, as from hell's profound,
Convulsing air, and shaking rocks around,
Which steep the soul in wonder, overwhelm the sense,
Show pride a dream, our strength but impotence,—
'Tis the dread power displayed by this wild mass
Of living waters, maddening as they pass ;
Power mocking human force, unchecked, sublime,
Not urged for days, for years, but dateless time.
No moment, since the flood, those waves have slept,
But on unresting plunged, and sounding leapt ;
And now they dash through air, as these poor eyes
Their grandeur view, and awe finds vent in sighs :
And when our turf-wrapped breast shall throb no more,
Race following race entombed on yonder shore,

Still shall their mighty voice to heaven ascend,
While earth's new children o'er their glories bend,
The final echoes of that voice at last
Mingling, and lost, in Judgment's trumpet-blast.

Great rivers and strong cataracts speak of might,
And Taste beholds them with a rapt delight ;
Yet no full image those proud scenes supply
Of soul-expanding, dread infinity.
While splendour, majesty, may crown their course,
We know the river's bounds, the torrent's source :
Hence fancy, unexcited, spreads not there
The wild free wing, but drops from fields of air.
E'en ocean doth not all o'erwhelm the soul,
Though on the waves that endless ages roll,
Grandeur unchanged, and awful glory brood,
Peopling with dreams its azure solitude :
Round the huge globe, though storm-tossed billows foam,
Their depths immensity's primeval home,
Time, pale and powerless, listening to their roar,
There lies a bottom, and there winds a shore ;
And this doth limit spirit's onward flight ;
Waves end at last—seas are not infinite.

'Tis Heaven that hath no goal, no path, no bound,
Commencing, closing never, vast, profound,

Beyond thought's stretch, for where the end appears,
Space is—God's home, and hung with living spheres.
The myst'ries, we can pierce not, ever raise
The soul most high, and glory sheds most rays
On calm infinitude, the type of God ;
When springs the' immortal spirit from the sod,
Entering the wide domain of space and thought,
Then, nearer to the' angelic, man is brought ;
Then Nature's wonders, pointing heavenward, shine,
And Pleasure takes a form the most divine.

See ! Night her fields of azure spreads on high,
And, one by one, stars blossom o'er the sky ;
While suns thick sprinkle distant depths, like foam,
And Glory cries, " Behold my radiant home !"
Oh ! at such hour, to send the spirit through
That gate, the eye, and pierce the mystic blue ;
To mark God's very presence glowing there,
Breathing grand order through the realms of air ;
His finger guiding each stupendous world,
That else to wreck and chaos would be hurled—
What holier, loftier sight, can man desire
This side the grave, to elevate, inspire,
Pouring dread pleasure on his finite sense,
Wafting him near unveiled Omnipotence ?

Worlds are the letters of God's memory-book,
The faint, far shadows of his radiant look ;
The golden signs He counts his ages by,
The mighty dials of eternity !

In earliest time, ere Science sprang to birth,
Her grand revealings, sun-like, dazzling earth,
Men viewed the heavens, and vague delight and awe
Begot wild dreams, and breathed from all they saw.
Chaldean sages raised the museful eye,
And read fate's writing graven on the sky ;
The stars, they deemed, created but for man,
Told all his joys, and life's predestined span ;
While magi, kindling with adoring love,
Saw wandering angels and blest shapes above,
And, throning Deity 'mid light afar,
Dropped on their knees in worship of a star.

But Science turns the key, and proudly throws
Her door ajar, and through it splendour flows.
What rapture fires the eager soul to gaze
On late-veiled scenes, and thread Discovery's maze !
Find, one by one, those gems which ages keep,
The precious truth-pearls hid in Nature's deep !
See tiny moons round planets creep and shine,
And planets draw their sun-encircling line ;

Mark suns themselves 'round mightier orbs revolve,
And vapoury comets burn, yet ne'er dissolve ;
While light, deemed clouds in some far field of space,
Dim, scattered star-dust, pearling Nature's face,
Turns, by the magic of the lifted glass,
To countless globes, and each a ponderous mass,
With hills, perchance, and continents, and seas,
And woods that quiver to the wild-winged breeze,
Millions, who breathe, think, smile, and sorrow there,
Doomed, like ourselves, eternal life to share.

So Galileo raised the tube on high,
And sent his soul in rapture o'er the sky,
Forgot, in that blest trance, his cruel foes,
Nor heard their curse, nor pondered on his woes.
So Flamsteed, happier than the envied gay,
In mapping heaven's starr'd plains, passed life away ;
And Newton, Nature's priest, toiled weary years,
Till on him burst the secret of the spheres—
The law that sways all forms, from mists upcurled,
To moon-drawn tides, from pebbles to a world.
Then pleasure thrilled his soul, in yon profound
To mark the planets sweep their errless round,
Each linked to each by this strong, viewless chain,
Mysterious love through matter's wide domain,

That ne'er can fail, since God the force supplies,
O grand, stupendous framework of the skies !

On Scotia's heath there leant a youthful form,
Worn by hard toil, made rough by many a storm ;
His tattered garb, shrunk limbs, and features pale,
All told too plainly Want's pathetic tale :
But mind, in that poor frame, concealed its worth,
Like priceless gold, deep hid in barren earth,
The beauteous pearl beneath the darkling sea,
The bloom close-veiled in Winter's arid tree.
And there he crouched, his flocks in slumber near,
But breathed no harsh complaint, and dropp'd no tear ;*
Black night fell 'round him, earth his chilly bed,
Yet skies their noxious dews unheeded shed ;
His mild blue eyes, unsleeping, sought the heaven,
The active soul to dreams of glory given.
The star-beams lit that upraised, placid face,
Shining with intellect, not beauty's grace ;
And while, from orb to orb, he turned his sight,
As from an urn he drank their living light.
They thrall'd the heart whose ardour nought could
dim ;
There seemed a link between that heaven and him.

* It was near Keith, a village in Banffshire, that the celebrated Ferguson, when a boy, was employed by a farmer to tend sheep ; and half his nights were spent in watching the stars.

The patient student vigil thus would keep,
All else, save him and distant worlds, asleep.
The sports which others love at that wild age,
Shunned or despised, could ne'er his soul engage ;
He only felt a burning wish to rise,
And solve the problem of the life-filled skies,
Cast from the heath a long, long, raptured gaze,
Till fancy mixed with that far stellar blaze,
And bliss that ne'er on heroes, monarchs, smiled,
Warmed the poor heart of genius' richest child.

O ye refulgent wonders ! steps of gold
That angels tread on, when their course they hold,
With beam-like swiftness up the holy blue,
To reach heaven's gates, and God's near glory view !
Gems hewn from space, for ever flashing down,
Set in stupendous Nature's gorgeous crown !
Harps of eternity ! whose numbers sound
From sapphire thrones, along the vast profound,
Swept by a million seraphs, whose bright wings
Shed all the beams that bathe the heavenly strings :
World-Edens ! where flowers die not, storms ne'er rave,
Crime is unknown, and death has dug no grave—
Whate'er ye be, calm myst'ries of the sky !
Breathing sublime religion from on high,

Your beauty wins us, and your grandeur awes,
Telling, in thunder-tones, of One First Cause—
Thunders that roll from atoms as from spheres,
Thunders that sound through everlasting years.

We view ye, stars ! deep sighing as we gaze,
Our own small planet lost amid your blaze ;
E'en were we not, your lights would seem no less,
Beaconing wide space—heaven's ocean-wilderness.
The spirit humble grows, and feels as nought,
'Mid vast conceptions from your glories caught ;
Yet while we lowly bend, strong hope inspires ;
Shall the great Maker watch your endless fires,
Unthinking matter with such pomp array,
Adorn each orb, and shape its shining way,
And yet forget aspiring, ardent mind,
That wings yon depths, and leaves each world behind ?
Is soul uncared for, 'midst this mighty plan ?
Say, rather, all was made for deathless man—
For man that breathes, exults, where'er we trace
A world-oasis in the wilds of space.
Spirit surpasseth clay, as dread, sublime,
Ungrasped Eternity transcendeth Time.
God is all goodness—shall he joy to see
His orbs expire ? each spirit cease to be ?

God is all love—then would it soothe his mood
To rule supreme, in still, cold solitude ?—
No, rise, oh soul ! nor dread extinction's hour,
Heaven wills thy life, unending years thy dower ;
Worlds are but nurs'ries for thine infant state,
Glorious, august those worlds, but thou more great !

We stand where, child of storms, the' Atlantic roars,
Kissing with fond, wild lip, Cornubian shores ;
But night rocks Ocean's cradle, till the wave
Calms into slumber, and forgets to rave,
Its late toss'd hair of spray laid smooth and sleek,
The smiling moonbeam on its smiling cheek.
Beauty below, sublimity on high,
Soul's aspirations vent them in a sigh ;
A weed on Being's depths at random thrown,
We seem in this hushed universe—alone,
And read the historic stars, 'mid hopes and fears,
Lost in their chronicle of countless years.

Yet the far worlds seem friends ; a wondering boy,
They filled our yearning heart with awe and joy,
And formed for golden fancies a grand theme ;
'Twas bliss intense to watch their lights and dream,
And rove amid their glories, and to think
How life passed there ; if man joy's cup might drink,

And, rivalling angels, pure perfection know,
Or fallen, like doomed mortals, feed on woe.
And shall this passion, with dull years, wax cold ?
Shall we the populous infinite behold,
The paradise of stars, and woo no more
All that enthralled, and charmed in days of yore ?
O worlds eterne ! life-fields august as fair !
To ye we stretch our arms, we breathe our prayer ;
Owns not our heart emotions passing speech ?
Do not your God-voiced lessons more than teach ?
Thus as we muse below, and gain through sense
A dim far glance of heaven's magnificence,
Feels not the soul how worthless all beside—
Ambition's loftiest aims, the dreams of pride ?
Burning to know e'en more of each veiled sphere,
And burst the chain that binds us captives here ?—
When comes that night, vain terrors pall with gloom,
Faith bridging with bright beams, thy gulf, O tomb !
Ours may it be, calmed, cheered, by watchful love,
To fix our eyes on world-gemmed plains above,
Drink from those globes assurance, fraught with bliss,
Our path lies upward, through that starr'd abyss,
Feel Deity around, and heaven more nigh,
And as we trustful lived, so hopeful die.

PLEASURE.



BOOK II.



GENERAL VIEW OF PLEASURE—THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS,
GREEKS, AND ROMANS—GLANCE AT MODERN COUNTRIES
—ITALY, SPAIN, FRANCE, AND ENGLAND.



FROM mystic glories of the solemn spheres,
We turn to earth—to human smiles and tears ;
For still, though dark our fate, and seared our bowers,
Where crime's black serpent creeps through all the
 flowers,
And half our pleasures sickening in their bloom,
Drop corpses into Misery's dreary tomb—
'Tis here, 'tis here, our dreams, our wishes cling,
Love lights his torch, and Hope expands her wing ;
'Tis here our sympathies, our hearts repose,
The golden doors to countless joys unclose :

And meant not God that all should taste delight,
While journeying to a land more calm, more bright,
He ne'er had giv'n such strong desire for bliss,
He ne'er had framed, for man, a world like this.

When fell from Deity effulgent showers
Of brightest smiles, on Earth's primeval bowers,
As formed but of those smiles, sun-beams her robe,
Pleasure, a spotless angel, sought our globe.
Where'er our parents moved, she hovered round,
Lending more magic to each sight and sound,
Gave sunnier glance to Morning's opening eye,
And richer fragrance to Noon's balmy sigh,
With deeper crimson flushed the holy hill—
That altar-step, where Evening, meek and still,
Knelt down to pray, her pallid forehead raised,
As earliest stars through Heaven's blue windows gazed.
Pleasure woke Nature's harp of boughs and streams,
The fairy music prompting rapture-dreams,
Spread turf more soft for Eve's white-glancing feet,
And gave the fruits a taste more rich and sweet,
Poured on the heart, from many a viewless spring,
Hopes, visions high, yet warm and ravishing,
Trailed glory o'er the earth and conscious skies,
Making more blest e'en blissful paradise !

But man went forth—the child of crime and woe,
And Pleasure's white wings lost their taintless snow :
A shade o'ercast that late joy-beaming face,
And Evil marr'd her form, and heavenly grace.
Yet 'mid the eclipse, sweet rays were struggling still,
Across the waste flowed many a living rill ;
Stored in that breast, the seeds of bliss were found,
Her grateful task those seeds to scatter round.
Such now the Spirit mercy sent to cheer
Poor fallen mortals, drooping, weeping, here ;
To lead at times astray, but oftener far
To light their stormy path—a friendly star !
To bid, Despair ! thy haggard form depart,
And bring Joy's summer to Grief's wintry heart,
Weave golden threads into the woof of fate,
Till man might cry—I am not desolate !

Angel of Pleasure ! though no more thine eyes
May smile the light they smiled on Eden's skies,
Where is the land thy shining foot ne'er trod ?
Thou com'st, a star-crowned messenger, from God.
What though earth's polished sons may win from thee
More radiant gifts, more lofty ecstasy,
Thine outspread wings their iris-colours throw
Where'er skies arch, or life's wide currents flow.

The soul through good, through evil, strives to gain
Glimpses of thee, and chase the night of pain ;
And dark the storm that heaven's sweet azure shrouds,
When no bright joy-beams pierce the opening clouds.

Lo ! where with milk-white shore and coral cave,
The palmy island gems the South Sea wave,
And, like a star set in that lower sky,
Cheers and adorns the blue immensity :
There woods are ever green, and fruit and flower
Mingle their hues in Summer's glowing bower ;
While Fragrance breathes her soul in spicy dells,
The mango flames, the lush pomegranate swells,
And, by each stream, lies tempting, moss-enrolled,
The melon's globe of vegetable gold.
Hark ! as the sun walks down the jewell'd West,
And round him wraps the clouds—his gorgeous vest,
Hastening to banquet in his Ocean-hall,
Blazing behind the' horizon's ruby wall,
A sound of mirth goes up from hill and shore ;
There sports the savage, day's few labours o'er :
What knows his untaught soul of bliss refined,
Wit born of art, the' ambrosial feast of mind ?
Yet courts he pleasure, simple, rude, severe,
Rows his canoe, or casts the blunted spear,

Sings his wild strain, and leads his bead-decked maid,
In mazy dance beneath the plantain's shade.—
Cool springs the well in hot Arabian sands,
Guarding whose crystal heaven-sent Mercy stands ;
Round the moss'd brink the jaded wanderers press,
And drink deep draughts of life and blessedness,
Then sit in groups, and smoke the flavourous weed,
And while their coursers rest, and camels feed,
Entranced they list the thrilling Orient tale
Of Ghouls and Afrits, till each cheek turns pale,
Of Peris' radiant forms, till glist'ning eye,
And head upraised, attest their ecstasy.

Nor think, while beating 'mid eternal snows,
And round the pole the Storm his trumpet blows,
The heart ne'er warms with pleasure ; here, e'en here,
Her smile can bless, her seraph-voice can cheer.
What though 'mid ice the Polar savage builds
His reed-roofed hut, that rare a sunbeam gilds,
See ! as the Aurora fires his wintry sky,
He hunts the bear, and cries his rapture-cry,
Trims in his dim abode the social light,
Gives to wild feast and mirth the lengthened night,
Nor sighs for sunny climes, or flowery fields,
Charmed with what Heaven bestows, and Nature
yields.—

E'en the poor slave, beyond the Western deep,
Not always mourns his chain, or droops to weep,
But loves at times, no cruel scourger nigh,
To dream of home, and muse on hours gone by ;
Fancy restores past joys, and, free again,
He roams his sun-bright hills, and palmy glen,
Hears the rude song that charmed in youthful day,
Sees at his side his tawny offspring play,
While she, long lost, hangs raptured on his breast ;
And thus, in mercy-dreams, his heart is blest.

Back through Time's shadowy vista glances cast !
Revive dead years ! unsepulchre the past !
The past which, coffin'd deep, doth mouldering lie
In that great tomb-yard, 'lapsed eternity ;
Early as Passion her wild flag unfurled,
The soul of pleasure warmed the ancient world.
Old Egypt, with her temples stern and grand,
Where dim Religion stretched her spectral hand,
And man seemed born to dream of death alone,
To watch the mummied tomb, and build his own—
Egypt, despite her curse—dark thought and woe—
Grew blithe at times, and bade joy's currents flow ;
Her youth could game, her maids love-glances dart,
Wine could make jovial, music soothe the heart,

And frolic's varied feats provoke the smile,
Till mirth's gay shout rang loud, by solemn Nile.

Where now, at grandeur's grave, Taste weeping sits,
And o'er bald stones the bat at evening flits,
And fancy sees, 'mid wrecks of gorgeous things,
Glide 'neath the moon the shades of Egypt's kings,
Once blazed a sumptuous palace;* wealth heaped there
All that was strangely splendid, brightly fair ;
Softened like pearl the marble-crust'd walls,
Pillars from Karnac graced the vast, high halls :
The Pharaohs' rifled tombs gave paintings rich,
And large-eyed sphinxes sate in many a niche ;
Couches from Ind, gold-fringed, adorned each room,
And Tyrian draperies lent voluptuous gloom.
Beauty and languor breathed a dreamy spell,
And love left Paphos in those bowers to dwell.
All that could prostrate mind, and ravish sense,
Burned in that home of soft magnificence.
Viewing the pile rich-hued, far flashing light,
Ye half might deem it raised by sorcerer's might,
Or that some god, from gold-paved heav'n, had brought
A glorious dome, of stars and sky-gems wrought,

* The site of the palace of the Ptolemies, at Alexandria, is near the obelisks, and south of a mass of ruins called "The Tower of the Romans."

And placed the wonder there, its dazzling glow
To charm all eyes, and shame each work below.

Here reigned the passions—such as ever weave
The spells that lure, the visions that deceive ;
Thought, Wisdom, entering here, found instant death,
The very air seemed Pleasure's perfumed breath.
No sober monitor the bosom stirred,
Young Joy's melodious voice alone was heard.

And who the lovely Mistress, still bright flowers
Flinging beneath your feet, ye flying hours?
A queen who conquered, not by arms, but eyes,
Her troops—sweet smiles, her keenest weapons—sighs.
Oh ! crowned by Beauty, though mind's graces flee,
Passion's frail child, incarnate Pleasure see !
Her days a dream of love, of pomps, and joys,
Honour and virtue jests, and men her toys,
In life's brief span, as fate would trebly bless,
Ages of wild delight she seemed to press.
On others' path some single flower may fall
From rapture's varied wreaths—she grasped them all !
To fatal, worshipped vice her heart was sold,
Heaping up joys, as misers gather gold.
She seemed the genie of a sunset, zoned
With rosy fire, on downy purple throned ;

Pleasures and passions, like rich streams of light
Following rich streams, and still the last most bright ;
Revelling in flame and glory, with no fear
Of Night, the dark Avenger, glooming near.

Renown embalms a Cleopatra's name,
Though linked with falsehood, and dyed black with
 shame.

She sate within the hall of Egypt's kings,
Where flushed Delight now spread her gaudy wings,
And Pleasure's spirit laughed at care and time,
And all the woes that wring the soul of Crime.
Her couch, high raised upon the porphyry floor,
Gleamed like a rich pink shell on ocean's shore,
And calm she leant within its blushing cave—
A shining Nereid pillowed on the wave.
Her spotless robes, thin floating, veiled her form,
As haloes gird the moon, when skies are warm,
Her ebon tresses streaming down their snow,
Till the bright snake-rings swept the floor below.
Chains of soft pearls her softer neck enwreathed ;
Splendour an atmosphere around her breathed ;
The crown, whose gems Ind's suns to light had kissed,
Flashed to the flashing diamonds on her wrist.
But dim such gay attire, beside the face
Of her the' unmatched 'mid Eve's enthralling race ;

Who gazed must gaze again, who fled must turn ;
Her's were the spells that fix, the looks that burn.
Spirit sat throned upon her bright starr'd brow,
Witching the senses, while it made them bow.
Oh ! more than lips, that conquering smile could speak—
Sun of the heart out-beaming on the cheek !
In vain the long dark lashes strove to hide
Those orbs of southern fire, of Orient pride,
Where soul and love flashed forth, with every glance,
Quick as the sparkle of a darted lance,
Or stream that late through shadowy flags had run,
Bursting to sight, and laughing in the sun.—
It seemed as Love, each country wandering through,
Stole charms from every maid who met his view,
Then, hurrying back, the costly theft bestowed
On that bright face, where more than beauty glowed.

Silent, yet gazing heart and soul away,
At the sweet Circe's feet a warrior lay.
Like some poised rock an infant's hand may move,
His strong soul felt, and, trembling, bowed to love,
The boy-god's honied shaft, more potent far
Than the red thunderbolt of Gorgon war.
The camp, the shout of hosts, the crimson'd field,
Could once inspire, and wildest rapture yield ;

Now other dreams the Roman's heart beguiled,
And joy alone beneath the myrtle smiled.
Ambition's star, late brilliant, had grown dim,
All noble deeds, thrones, glory, nought to him.
Soft Pleasure bowed the hero to a slave,
Vice, lawless love, a coward made the brave ;
And Antony, cast weed-like on life's shore,
In that mad dream, was Antony no more.

But hark ! around voluptuous music floats ;
Pillar and roof roll back the quivering notes ;
Then, pulsing sweet, they sigh like Evening's breeze,
Or silvery whispers breathed by summer seas.
Young Ethiop slaves bright crystal salvers bear,
Heaped with all luscious fruits, and dainties rare,
Goblets of gold where sparkles Chian wine,
Like melted rubies from some Indian mine ;
While others censers swing, whence perfumes rise,
Concentered essence from Arabian skies.
And see ! through vistas, spangled wreaths adorn,
Where painted lamps mock rosy-opening morn,
Fair maids from Esné thread the joyous dance ;*
Now, like a crested wave, their troops advance,

* Among the sculptures in the grottoes of Eleithias, near Esné, is one representing women playing on the double flute, while their companions are dancing, much in the style of those young females known now in Egypt by the name of Almeh-girls.

Then backward draw—the swift-retiring spray—
And part in lines and seem to melt away.
Anon more bold they sweep, and court the view,
Skimming, like flying clouds, the floors of blue,
Raise the curved arm, and point the agile toe,
That falls as light, and spotless too, as snow :
Grace in each movement, witchery in each eye,
The hard, cold sage might warm, the hermit sigh,
To view a scene where all sweet spells combined
To mask stern Truth, and chain aspiring mind.

And this was pleasure, such as thousands think
Life's richest draught—a cup they long to drink :
And this was pleasure—ashes gleaming fair,
So wildly fed on by that reckless pair ;
Flowers in the sunset gardens of the sky,
Which, while we view them, mock us, fade, and die.
Vice ever glitters, wit and taste her boast,
But still distrust her when she glitters most.
Oh, joys ! false transports ! whither do they tend ?
Shall they in sunshine, or in darkness end ?
Support the soul, a foretaste of heaven's bliss ?
Or pierce with stings, and plunge in woe's abyss ?

Greece ! where the plant of heaven-nursed genius grew,
And thirsty mind from wells of wisdom drew ;

Where rose Refinement's star, whose silvery ray
The clouds of rudeness brightly chased away ;
Land of the great, the gifted, and the free !
The love of Pleasure reigned supreme in thee.
No gloomy creed thy hopeful children swayed ;
When olived Peace sheathed Battle's crimson blade,
Taste woke her lute, Joy laughed off cares and pains,
And Eros bound stern Thought in rosy chains.
The' aspiring few might seek the sage's side,
Listening grand truths by calm Ilissus' tide,
But thousands crowded, won by Pleasure's call,
The' exciting theatre's far-circling wall,
Felt a strange rapture in that gorgeous show,
In tragic tears, and imitated woe :
Dark Æschylus with terror thrilled the heart,
Euripides winged pathos' conquering dart,
While gay Cratinus, to wit's spirit given,
Made stormy laughter ring from earth to Heaven.

Oh thou ! whose dreams the soul with languor filled,
Though sweet the dews thy honied words distilled,
Whose doctrines, grovelling half, and half sublime,
Have bee-like worked, inoculating Time ;
Friend of poor human nature in each age,
Hail Epicurus ! Pleasure's priest and sage !

Though Slander wronged thee, praise we dare not yield
The doubtful harvest of thy sunny field ;
While virtue, charity, and love, might be
The golden ears, rank, choking tares we see.
Bliss was thy worship, bliss thine aim alone,
Mind was the crouching slave, and Good the throne :
No stirring deeds should life's brief hours employ,
Ease the best wisdom, indolence true joy.

Despite proud Reason's boast, Perfection's schemes,
The love of Pleasure prompted all thy dreams.
Were man, by Heaven's dread fiat placed on earth,
No bright hereafter, and no second birth,
Orphan of Nature, doomed to roam forlorn,
A bubble on Time's sea at random borne,
A quivering leaf annihilation's breath
Whirls to decay, and shrivels into death—
Then wert thou wise to chase all thought and care,
And each sweet dream of present rapture share,
Live for the hour so soon to flee away,
Bask, while heavens smile, in Pleasure's summer ray,
Each dear enchantment eager round thee call,
Hope chained to time, a dying world thine all !

Yet erred as deeply they, who held in scorn
The fairest wreaths that Pleasure's brow adorn,

Who deemed each passion man's eternal foe,
Our duty life-long war to lay them low.

The Stoic frowned to ice warm Nature's tide,
His were the thawless snows of selfish pride ;
The sports, the smiles, the graces charmed not him,
His heart a sepulchre all cold and dim,
Where feeling's corpse in mummied slumber lay,
And Apathy, dull mourner, watched the clay.
A dark, sad spirit, springing from that tomb,
Veiled each bright scene—the star, the flow'ret's bloom,
Sighed from the mountain, brooded o'er the dell,
And turned to harshness music's heavenly spell.
See the proud stoic move, with earth-fixed eye,
Scorning to smile, yet scorning more to sigh,
Deeming light pleasures Circes that decoy,
Folly in laughter, frenzy in our joy,
And pitying man, he may nor love, nor bless,
Without, all calm—within, all wretchedness !

Not Epicurus, then, nor Zeno make
Thy guides in life ; a path between them take.
The flowers, Joy offers, cull with grateful heart,
Scorpions not always from their bright wreaths dart.
Though placed by Heaven for noblest aims below,
Pleasure may o'er thee arch its gold-rimm'd bow.

Bird, beast, disport them ; ocean, earth, and air,
Are Beauty's kingdom, all rejoicing there ;
And He, who radiant smiles o'er Nature threw,
Meant man to banish tears—feel rapture too.

Where Time, Oblivion's brother, fell as she,
And eldest born of hoar Eternity,
Crumbles the column, and o'erthrows the bust,
Speaking the grand and beautiful to dust,
And stars on Rome look sorrowing from their spheres,
A lone, pale form to fancy oft appears :
Half skeleton, half shade, she passeth by,
With sallow, sunken cheek, and rayless eye :
Cold on her withered breast the night-winds beat,
Bare to the flints her once gay-saddled feet ;
Fast flow her icy tears ; her hollow wail
Thrills from the ruin, dies upon the gale—
She seems some outcast soul, hope, mercy o'er,
Wandering in gloom and woe for evermore.

It is the ghost of Pleasure ; can there glide
A ghost more sad by Acheron's dark tide ?
She flits where Death's dear plant, the ivy, palls
With funeral shade the circus' mouldered walls,
Muses on days when, 'round that life-filled space,
The car-borne gallant urged the fiery race,

And bounding hearts the hour to rapture gave,
No dreams foreshadowing ruin and the grave.—
She weeps in Nero's once voluptuous dome,
Stronghold of passion, luxury's glowing home :
Here in vast sculptured halls, the feast she crowned,
Sang Bacchic airs, and sped the wine-cup round,
Taught Paphian maids the love-enkindling dance,
Thrall'd by their smile, and conquered by their glance ;
She tripped with Folly, masked with painted Crime,
And thickly wreathed with flowers the scythe of Time.
For revellers now, and dancers' airy sweep,
Thorns drink cold dew, and poisonous reptiles creep ;
For ringing laugh, and music's love-soft tone,
Loud hoots the hermit-owl, the breezes moan.
O Riot ! Folly ! still to thousands dear,
Pause in your madness, read a lesson here !

But chief when silver-flooding moonbeams smile,
And coldly kiss Vespasian's hoary pile—*
Ruin stupendous, looking, in sad gloom,
Glory's sarcophagus, a Nation's tomb—
That wild, weird form is seen ; she glides along
Paths marble-strewn, and chants her funeral song ;
Or, on some grass-grown buttress, takes her stand,
Sighs o'er the wreck, and lifts her shadowy hand.

* The Colosseum.

Here once she triumphed ; here, in days long flown,
'Round myriad throbbing hearts her spells were
thrown ;

Yet bliss from barbarous sights was all she gave,
Gross sense a god, immortal mind a slave.

See ! through the gate, pours in the living mass,
Fate and grim Death pleased watching, as they pass.
And soon Youth, Beauty, bench and gallery crowd ;
Gleam rich-zoned tunics, laughter echoes loud ;
Now in the' arena foams the beast of prey,
Lion with lion matched, in maddening fray ;
Now man confronts his fellow ; eager eyes
Shine on all sides, and feast on agonies.
In sports like these, Rome's sons a rapture find,
Joy wild though brief, intense though unrefined ;
And thus the combatants, while friends and foes
Cheer, urge them on, in death's last struggle close,
Plunge the triumphant steel, or conquered lie,
And sternly-proud, with smiles of valour die.

Pale ghost of Pleasure ! wherefore look'st thou there,
Dropping thy mist-like arms in still despair ?
Sports, crowds have fled ; those hours that knew no
tears,
Have joined the' unfathomed dark of vanished years—

Hours, like poor water-drops on ocean's breast,
That just indent the wave, then melt to rest :
And every fiery heart hath turned to clay,
To' exult, to burn no more, till judgment-day.
In this vast pile there dwells but grief for thee,
Where, throned on ages, sits Sublimity,
And Silence stands, in sable garb arrayed,
On Solitude's pale lip her finger laid.
Bloom, wind-flower ! in the arena—lizard, crawl !—
On marble bench white, shimmering star-beams, fall !
Thou snake ! through weed-grown galleries, stealthy
glide !
Laugh, Desolation ! mocking human pride ;
And thou, wan Spirit ! restless hover 'round,
Till arches bow, nor mouldered stone be found !
In spot like this, Joy's ghost might love to dwell,
Where all things seem to mourn, and sigh—farewell !

Gaze through the world ; some races, active, gay,
Court every bliss, and smile their lives away ;
While others seem to barren dulness born,
Holding the heart's light moods in deepest scorn.
One Nation bows at Fancy's burning shrine,
All genius, soul, baptised with fire divine,
Stealing from Art and Nature pure delight,
And making bright things doubly fair and bright.

Another lacks all taste, and mental power,
All Heavenward thought—the mind's immortal dower ;
Such souls no progress make, as ages flow,
Too dull to brighten, and too cold to glow,
Wed to the present, caring nought for fame,
Life a drilled task, and mammon all their aim.

Why to the sons of Japheth, scattered o'er
Europe's broad bounds, and far Columbia's shore,
Hath Nature giv'n warm heart, and hope-bright eye,
Adventurous daring, vigour ne'er to die,
The sense of keen enjoyment, gathering still
The flowers of bliss on fortune's rudest hill ?
Why doth Shem's Eastern offspring lag behind,
Few gifts improved, to mournful sloth resigned ?
Yes, though the orient soul be stern and proud,
A gloom, a sadness, wrap it like a shroud ;
As if from Cain—dark dial of the past—
O'er hearts, e'en now, a lengthened shade were cast.
Smiles rare illume the Asian's swarthy cheek,
And rare his haughty lip will silence break ;
He thinks the Frank's gay life a wildering dream ;
Our mirth a crime, our pastimes madness seem :
For him no Science wields her wand of might,
No lore exalts, no walks of Art delight ;

To lean beneath the shade long, idle hours,
Gaze listlessly on skies, on founts and flowers ;
To murmur, "God is great !" and stroke the beard,
To place an alm in Fakir's hand revered ;
And when mind forces thought, to fly in dreams
To amaranthine bowers, and amber streams,
Blest Allah hath prepared beyond the tomb,
Peopled with houri-forms, all love and bloom—
These are his joys, and dim the hopes they wake—
The dull, slow springs of Pleasure's breezeless lake.

Rise, and behold where, wildly pulsing, beats
The breast to joy, in Pleasure's choicest seats !
Mark where her domes and bell-towers Florence rears,
Gay though so stately, blooming though in years—
Laughing on Arno's laughter-dimpling wave,
That wafting flowers from distant bank and cave,
Brings them, sweet off'rings, to her walls of white,
Eager and proud to worship thing so bright.—
Here Taste may ravished dwell, and polished mind,
'Mid stores of Art, a pure-born pleasure find,
Dream with the sculptor, with the painter glow,
And feel what States to deathless genius owe.
Here Beauty's eyes may wake that spark of bliss
First caught from Heaven, to cheer a world like this ;

And down where birds, and fairies, but intrude
On Vallombrosa's leaf-hung solitude,
The' Idealist may wander, lapped in dreams,
Read odes in flowers, hear golden hymns in streams,
And half believe, entranced by scene so fair,
A nook of Eden Heaven left blooming there.

O Venice ! though the iron conqueror now
Hath ploughed, with sorrow-scars, thy lovely brow,
And tears at times will blend with ocean's spray,
For Freedom tombed, and laurels reft away,
'Mid conscious billows, glorious art thou yet,
A stainless pearl in living emerald set :
Beauty her sky-wove mantle o'er thee throws,
And oft, when flinging back thy veil of woes,
Thy fair face laughs again, as in old hours,
Joy in thy halls, and witchery in thy bowers.

City of bounding hearts, to fancy dear !
Where tramp, and whir of wheels, ne'er jar the ear,
But noiselessly we glide, with fairy speed,
The waves our street, the gondola our steed.
He who sails Adria's gulf, first sees thee rise,
Half clasped by Ocean, half by stooping skies,
As loved by both, till clear the blue Heaven smiles
On cross-decked towers, and tall palatial piles,

Which flash, like Neptune's dwellings, from the deep,
Where their bright court the ocean-gods might keep.
Onward he ploughs, nor stops to breathe a sigh,
Where, robed in weeds, gray wrecks of glory lie,
But inly burns, and feels, despite the knell
Tolling from all things Grandeur's long farewell,
That Venice is not dead, but only sleeps,
And beauty's pathos, memory's magic keeps.
No, the Rialto's fame shall ne'er expire,
While lives a spark of genius' worshipped fire ;
While Otway melts, and Shakspeare sways mankind,
While one poor stone on Venice' site we find,
There shall the pilgrim stand, with thoughts that glow,
And muse on all her glory, all her woe.

See, through Eve's purple air St. Mark ascend !
The dying rays a holy splendour lend,
Like spirit-beams around some sainted head,
Most softly-pure, divinely, meekly shed.
High on his pillar, flashes o'er the wave
The "Lion winged"—the emblem of the brave.
List, as the burning sunset melts along
The ruby sea, the boatmen's answering song !
Half sad, half gay, it tells of times gone by,
When Pleasure's star hung brightest in life's sky ;

And yonder hear the lute's love-speaking tone—
Passion's sweet soul across the waters thrown ;
While silvery sounds float round from vesper-bells,
Like notes the Tritons wind on pink-lipped shells,
Dying as breezes fail, and swelling oft
Through mellowing heaven, in volumes rich and soft :
Grand bells ! Religion's voice poured deeply-clear—
Heart-touching bells ! that prompt the sigh and tear.

O yes ! the wave-born city, spite of ill,
Is Love's bright empress, Pleasure's favourite still ;
Her sons are gay of heart, her daughters' eyes
Rob depth from seas, and brilliancy from skies.
The carnival—the merry Bacchic time,
When smiles worn Care, and softens haggard Crime ;
When the pale scribe forgets his dull employ,
The lame will dance, the vagrant sing for joy.
From Morn to jocund Eve, the Pleasures there
Flaunt on the wave, make music of the air,
Knock at all hearts that, opening, let them in,
While Love, once scorned, his boldest wishes win.
The mask, the game, the dance, divide the day,
Wine crowns the board, and roses strew the way ;
But when steals on delicious, veiling night,
With breath so cooling, and with stars so bright,

And looks a welcome the coy, witching moon,
Silvering the far-off hills, and smooth lagoon,
Then, Venice ! comes thy triumph ; myriad lights
Deck the tall mansions, with their marble flights ;
And shoots the gondola from each broad stair,
Pennon'd and glittering, radiant as in air
Some gorgeous bird wings on, and charms the view,
Or coruscating star divides the blue :
A sea-sprite, gay as gracefully she goes,
The waves all luminous behind her close :
And fair the maids within ; no envious veils
May screen bright cheeks from Love, and wooing gales,
But, masks flung off, they bare the happy brow,
Raised to the moon—than moons more radiant now ;
And gentle lips breathe sweet, to some loved star,
Song mixed with tremblings of the soft guitar.
And look ! where other boats, winged fairies, dart,
Their freight more young, all jollity each heart ;
While some glide off, or chase the skiffs that flee,
And boisterous laughter rings, with shouts of glee.
Anon, across the listening surge, is borne
The mellow breathing of some plaintive horn ;
Anon, quick fire-works, like rent rosy spars,
Shoot up to heaven, and spread—new, blazing stars ;
Then deep-mouthed cannon, thundering, shakes the shore,
The waves their bright curls smoothing to the roar,

Which echoing, doubling 'round by cape and bay,
Rolls down the coast, and whispering dies away.—
O matchless scene ! O city ! Beauty's throne ;
No lovelier e'er in Eastern story shone ;
At hour like this, all harsher thoughts depart,
Thou home of joy ! thou worshipped of the heart !

Away ! before us lies romantic Spain,
With old hoar wood, tower'd hill, and rivered plain :
Her priest-rid sons are grave, their brows of gloom
Speaking dark thought, as borrowed from the tomb.
Deceptive calm !—so deep volcanos rest—
Passions, like lava, boil within each breast ;
And Pleasure's form they clasp, and wildly chase
Each marsh-fire joy, nor e'er resign the race.
In sea-washed Cadiz music, mirth, resort,
And unzoned Venus holds her dazzling court :
There Vice, false Pleasure masked, looks bright and
brave,
And charms Youth's heart, but digs his early grave,
Laughs sweetly in his face, but stabs the while—
An angel's beauty, with a demon's guile.
In famed Madrid the high, the mean, the proud,
Wrestle for bliss, and gay their motley crowd,
The hidalgo, boasting pure Castilian blood,
Borne, with the slave, on Pleasure's rushing flood.

Heaven's day of rest that city nothing heeds,
The actor plays, the light fandango speeds ;
Then in the circus bounds the maddened bull,
And shout the grave, and smile the beautiful,
Feel most delight, the brute's sad throes most keen,
And melt in rapture o'er the savage scene.

France ! favoured France ! where every season
showers

In Nature's lap a paradise of flowers ;
And corn, and fruits, and gushing wine abound,
Health's genial home, a bright enchanted ground ;
No land, save one, thy glorious peer may be,
All Nature's wealth, Heaven's blessings heaped on
thee.

France ! though, in days gone by, mad passions' flame
Red-wreathed thy loveliness, and seared thy fame,
When thou, the Pleasures' haunt, the Graces' seat,
Wert trampled low by Terror's iron feet,
And Revolution raised the sword, whose blow
Fell with two edges, smiting friend and foe ;
Though Celtic elements may ne'er expire
In Gallic breasts—change, lightness, headlong fire—
Valour is thine, and fancy's richest beam,
Genius' proud gifts, and learning's affluent stream,

Standing, with sea-queen Albion by thy side,
The world's great head, and Civilization's pride !

Yes, by thy side—o'er feuds, o'er hatreds past,
Lethe's out-blotting wave be, ever cast !
The lands, once rivals, love-knit sisters now,
Smiles on their lips, good will on each smooth brow.
The victories both have won, shall rouse not up
Memory's black gall to poison friendship's cup,
For nought again, in that wreathed cup, shall shine,
Cementing hearts, but pure and generous wine.
Albion and Gaul true friends, wide earth will be
Shielded from wrong, from grasping tyrants free :
Aye, the all-powerful two, on land and deep,
The destinies of guarded Nations keep ;
Their wedded standards, to the Heavens unfurled,
Shall give peace, justice, to a grateful world.

Now tread Gaul's olived plains, and vine-clad steeps,
Or where blue Loire through blossom'd valleys sweeps—
A line of melted turquoise trailing there,
A glass at which coy fairies braid their hair.
Mark the gay scene—no dark-soul'd Timon here,
The step is ever light, the eye is clear ;
Blithe bounds the heart beneath the rudest vest ;
Care, sorrow, fly the Gallic peasant's breast :

Though mean his cot, and hard his crust may be,
Thou canst not stay his smile, or check his glee.
Pleasure, like food, he craves ; the rural dance,
The simple song, the maiden's merry glance,
Excite, enchant him ; all the ills of life,
His own poor fortunes, troubled Europe's strife,
Pass like an April cloud, and scarcely dim,
One fleeting hour, the heaven of joy for him.

This inborn gaiety, this mood which springs,
Uncrushed by woe, on light elastic wings,
E'en more supremely reigns, where glittering lies
The boast of France—the cynosure of eyes.
City! where every passion, good and ill,
Hath seemed, in turn, volcanic souls to fill ;
Where fierce Ambition horsed her brazen car,
Shook her red crest, and dared a world to war :
Where maddening Faction breathed her blast of flame,
And men seemed men no longer, save in name ;
Where envy burned, and Rancour marked its prey,
And Murder plied her trade by night, by day,
While victims' shrieks, 'mid rolling drums, were
drowned,
And fell the “knife of death” with ceaseless sound ;
E'en then, 'mid suffering, horror, and black wrong,
The Pleasures tripped, and sang their lightest song :

Yes, while the tocsin pealed its note of doom,
While Robespierre's smile was life—his frown a tomb,
And Paris seemed one charnel-house, where Death
Stalked to and fro, with hot, wide-wasting breath,
The Celtic levity prevailed o'er fear,
Choked feeling's spring, and banished pity's tear ;
Gay music echoed in the lamp-lit hall,
Theatric raptures held the heart in thrall ;
And he who lately trod the murderous scene,
And viewed, unmoved, the blood-steeped guillotine,
Joined in the dance, or breathed, in murmurs low,
The sentimental sigh o'er fancied woe !

But time has sped, and terror's task is done,
From blood and crime a lesson Gaul has won ;
Through the hot furnace of fierce passion passed,
Wild fann'd by Revolution's raging blast,
More purely now the spirit's metal flows,
Corruption's dross no more the surface shows.
Mad anarchy, aggression, and the scorn
For God and man, of hell's black Furies born,
Have sunk, a worn-out tempest, which appears
Gone with its thunder, down the West of years,
While sunshine breaks around, and softly still
The rainbow, Peace, drops o'er the glowing hill.

Securely now young Love may spread his wing,
And Hope her pearls in rich profusion fling ;
Light as a marriage-bell, whose note rebounds
From glen to mountain, Pleasure's descant sounds.
All eyes to fashion's star, Lutetia,* turn ;
There courtesy and grace the Nations learn.
Art, Science, Letters, speed their brilliant way,
Friend of mankind, not foe, proud Gaul to-day.
From Conquest's grave a tree of beauty springs,
And for past wounds and suffering, healing brings ;
That tree, soul's progress, its wide shadow—rest,
Making an Empire great, a people blest.

Hear ye the roar where stormy surges greet,
In foam and thunder, Albion's queenly feet,
As if each billow were a trumpet blown,
Voicing forth glory 'round her mighty throne ?
O favoured Isle ! where Freedom's spell has made
Each straw-roofed cot, beneath the brown elm's shade,
Strong as a rock-built fortress ! where the skies,
Though not oft cloudless, like soft woman's eyes,
Rain tears, then laugh the brighter, sending still
Blessings, like angels, down, on vale and hill.

* The ancient name of Paris.

Fair Amphitrite of the Northern wave !
The hardy mother of the great and brave !
Thy strength thou dost not wield to crush, oppress,
Disturb a world, or make men's pleasures less,
Spreading — and who would scorn thine island-
 charms ?—

To all the earth thy love-compelling arms ;
Thou bid'st injustice cease, and right be done,
Hailing, as brothers, all beneath the sun :
The' oppressed afar ne'er plead to thee in vain,
The slave, that plucks thy robe, lets fall his chain ;
The exiled, wronged, whate'er their sorrows be,
Haste to thy side, and find a friend in thee.

England, whose genius, rivalling e'en her might,
Pours to earth's furthest limits mental light,
Shall not the land, thus sending from her ark
The dove of peace and hope, o'er billows dark,
Herself the olive gain, and greatly rest,
And be, while gladdening, glad—while blessing, blest ?
Yes, Pleasure's sun beams down with happiest ray,
And cheers her children on life's wintry way ;
Joys gush around them, pure and copious springs,
Whose every wavelet, like a seraph, sings ;
And yet some flow polluted, crime and pride
Casting their poison in the alluring tide.

But here we pause, while treading Albion's shore,
Listening afar her mighty city's roar—
That Nineveh in vastness—that refined
And cultured Athens, in heaven-towering mind.
Not yet we trace the pleasures, dark or fair,
Witching with smiles, or spreading anguish there.
Augusta, like a moon, doth shine and sway,
While other cities, stars, their homage pay :
Hailed through applauding lands her honoured name,
The first in generous worth, as first in fame,
She woos the virtues of each age and clime,
But nurses, too, each passion and each crime.

END OF BOOK II.

PLEASURE.



BOOK III.



MUSIC—PAINTING—SCULPTURE.



MUSIC ! whate'er it be, whose subtile power
Steals to the soul, as dew into the flower—
A circling gush of thin and tremulous air,
Like quick-expanding waves struck waters bear,
Dying when past, as some frail-spoken spell,
To rove a ghost in Memory's shadowy cell :
An essence, like electric flame, whose light
Wakes sparkling only at Art's touch of might ;
A sky-born messenger on silvery wing,
Floating or sweeping, a triumphant thing,
But lost the instant that its course is o'er,
Like meteor's flash, or bubbles on the shore—

Whate'er it be, 'twas given when time began,
To soothe Creation's heart, and ravish man,
A world-embracing language all might know,
To prompt joy's smile, and chase the tear of woe.

Tones, like bright colours, richest depths unfold,
And speak their meaning as with words of gold.
Heaven formed the eye to mirror each fair scene,
The wave's clear azure, and the earth's fresh green,
Dwell with delight on Summer's spangled bower,
And gentle lessons read in stream and flower ;
So ears were meant to gather each sweet sound,
From all that thrills above, or breathes around,
Convey to finer nerves the notes that swell
From Art's bland chords, or Nature's airy shell,
Till soul should drink pure harmony's rich wine,
And feel a wordless pleasure half divine.

What music first was man's ? who formed his choir,
Ere Jubal shaped his pipe, or Thoth * his lyre ?
From Nature's chantry all his numbers came,
Strains not less sweet for lacking rule or name.
'Twas but to listen, when the twilight breeze
Crept, faintly sobbing, through the gold-crisped trees,

* Thoth, the Egyptian Mercury, is said to have invented the lyre with three strings.

And sounds, like memories mourning to depart,
Died through the ear, and melted on the heart.
'Twas but to walk the vale, when morn unfurled
Her flag of roses o'er the' awakened world,
And melodies, that made the dew-drops shake,
Gushed thick and fast from blossomed bower and brake ;
Yes, the glad throats, that nectar-warblings poured,
In rich contralto hailed Creation's Lord.
The streamlet, toying with the flowers and grass,
Gurgling o'er stones that broke its mirroring glass,
Ran gentlest tenor, while from rocks far up,
Cascades, white tumbling from stone cup to cup,
Hoarse dashing, and rebounding as they fell,
Sent forth the bass, with many a lull and swell ;
The winds, among old boughs, made bell-like chime,
Or, rustling ceaseless by, kept happiest "time."—
Such were the first sweet Nature-hymns that stole,
Like balm and peace, upon the woe-worn soul,
Speaking of Eden lost, as vale and hill
Echoes from angel-voices treasured still.
But when the mind a grander music sought,
In unison with high and solemn thought,
Then might the thirsting ear enraptured gain,
From wilder, bolder source, the lofty strain ;
Might listen, thrilling down the pathless sky,
The piercing treble of the eagle's cry,

Mingling with organ-tones from some wide shore—
The diapason of the billow's roar ;
Might catch, as loud and fierce the storm swept past,
The wailing grandeur of the trumpet-blast ;
And as from shadowed hills the fire-edged cloud
Marched on the scene, with front so black and proud,
Hear in the peals that from its depths would come,
The rolling music of the doubling drum.

But sounds became a science ; Egypt's lyre,
The Hebrew harp, Terpander's living wire,
Ravished young Taste, while, Love's soft mood to suit,
Warbled, with honied stops, the Lydian flute.
There breathes a magic in rich sound alone ;
We hang spell-bound on each mellifluent tone,
Though Memory wake not in her cloister-cell,
And no heart-touching tale the music tell.
Thus in some glimmering aisle the organ's roll,
Swelling and dying, awes, exalts the soul ;
And the long mellow note a bugle blows,
Feast-like regales the ear, at daylight's close.

Yet Music yields a charm more strong, more deep,
When rousing hopes and passions from their sleep,
And linking recollection's broken chain,
Till years steal back, or chilled love burns again :

E'en rude, severe, the' unpolished strains may be,
That melt to sighs, and wake to ecstasy.

Lo ! far away by Ganges' sun-bright stream,
Scotia's brave soldier pants beneath the beam ;
Worn by the march, and downcast, sad of mood,
The busy camp he feels but solitude :
The palm-green vale, the tints of earth and sky,
War's blaze and pomp, delight not mind nor eye ;
And stately music, such as thrilled of yore
From trump, and horn, and drum, can fire no more.
Hark ! the pipe plays, once heard on Scotia's hills ;
His eye's sad night a dawning sunshine fills :
Hark ! the pipe plays—a wild discordant note,
Yet oh ! to him how dear the sounds that float !
Winged with swift thoughts of home, they reach his
heart,
And, one by one, half dying memories start.
The breezy mountains with their heather-bells,
The tall coned pines that shade his native dells ;
The wild deer bounding up the ferny hill,
Hoary kirk-tower, and clattering, busy mill ;
The summer banks where hum gold-belted bees,
The cabin-home that peeps between the trees—
All rise before him now ; all seem to pass,
Vivid and true, in fancy's beamy glass ;

His languor, sorrow, flee ; those Highland strains
Send the quick blood through warmed and tingling
veins,

Nerve his bowed spirit, chase his gloom and fears,
Call up the tales of proud, heroic years,
And yield a pleasure more intense that hour,
Than soul e'er felt, when grasping fame or power.

Music exists for all, like flowers and streams,
And the warm luxury of Summer beams ;
Music exists for all ; its silvery spring
Flows for the homeless beggar, as the king,
And dull the heart where no fine chord shall lie,
Responding sweet to star-born harmony.
Heaven meant each breast a shrine—a golden cell,
Where hope, and love, and memory's train, should
dwell,

Vestals to wake or sleep, advance or stand,
Like Prospero's sprites, as Music waves her wand.
Yet not to science deem all power confined,
For simplest sounds please best the simple mind.
And who shall say but Nature's children reap
Delight as pure, a joy as warm and deep,
Listening the lowliest strain, as tutored souls,
For whom grand Music's full-waved torrent rolls ?

An English village : down the drowsy West
The broad-faced sun, like Labour, sinks to rest.
No wind to stir the steeple's lazy vane,
A mellow topaz, burns each cottage pane.
The idle kine low softly on the lea,
The idle peasant smokes beneath the tree ;
The idle stream just lapses smooth and slow,
And honied flowers are idly bending low.
Some spell arrests the busy tide of life ;
Hushed the green spot, as if no care or strife
Could e'er bring discord to a scene so calm,
Where earth looks meek content, and heaven is balm.

Who enters now the hamlet, dust-besprent,
Tattered his garb, with travel worn and bent ?
The' Italian plays, and rude ears drink the sound,
A silent, listening group fast gathering 'round ;
Rolls the small organ's note, and plaintive, shrill,
He blows, with rushing breath, the' Arcadian quill.
The tune he brought from where dun waters greet
Rome's mouldering piles—now gay, now sadly sweet :
Science for such poor strains might scorn avow ;
Not they who circled Music's votary now.
Old Age, faint-smiling, peeped Youth's shoulder o'er,
The urchin mute, who rare was mute before ;

A wondering stare the rough-soul'd ploughman made,
The beldame left her wheel beneath the shade ;
Drawn to the scene with timid, curious look,
The rose-lipp'd maid her cottage task forsook,
Hung on the tones, her fair locks backward swept,
And, as the music prompted, smiled or wept.
Strange sympathy moved all, and pleasure fell
Like dew on hearts, thus owning music's spell ;
Though rude the sounds, a spirit charmed the air,
And feeling swayed, and nature triumphed there.

But turn, where genius, with high art combined,
Prepares a richer feast for cultured mind.
Enter, as Night stars heaven, a peopled hall ;
Flowers grace young heads, soft mellowing lamp-beams
fall,

And Beauty smiles, and Wealth with title vies,
And intellect is flashed from thought-deep eyes.
Music's proud epic lifts their souls to-night,
And mortal genius dares an angel's flight :
How mute each tongue ! how silent that vast room !
Bright Harmony hangs there on viewless plume,
Waiting to catch the sounds she loves so well,
As heaven is hushed ere coming thunders swell.
A gush of sweetness—crash of vibrant strings—
And all his soul each rapt Musician flings

In melody's deep sea ; yet sweet the roar
Of those note-waves on Music's magic shore.

Art strives in sound to shape Creation's birth,
Glories of heaven, and charms of new-born earth ;
As the grand organ rolls in under tone,
And wail bassoon, and horn, and deep trombone,
We image chaos, darkness, and the sleep
Of elements, and feel the heart's blood creep.
Those wild quick numbers speak Confusion's reign,
Rocks forming, hills upheaved, the shifting main :
But soon calm tones—Law's sovereign flag unfurled—
Breathe Order's spirit moving round the world.
Those undulating murmurs tell that waves
Cover the gulfs, and, settling, wash their caves.—
Loud chorus-swells—deep trumpet-blasts—a pause ;
Now comes the triumph of the Great First Cause :
Not yet the sun hath flashed God's love in beams,
Not yet hath yellowed woods, or burnished streams ;
Not yet hath taught young flowers, in letters bright,
The name of Spring along the vales to write ;
For vapours erst had palled his distant ray,
But now those mists of chaos roll away.
See the faint dawn ! unnumbered tones respire,
Like fluttering winds, from all the mighty choir ;

To greet the stranger, harp and flute sound low,
Piano chimes, like water's bubbling flow ;
From bows soft-drawn, a thousand small notes fly,
As if in each a fairy breathed a sigh.
The thin-voiced piccolo, the tiny fife,
The light-touched drum, no more with thunder rife—
Music as sweet as Memory's dream of love,
Gentle as angel's sigh from bowers above,
Welcomes the first bright beam that tints with red
The waiting clouds, and smiling mountain's head—
The beam that, arrowing off the sun's grand brow,
Tells Time is born, his march commencing now.*

He comes ! the vast orb comes ! heaven's new-
crowned king,

Life in his warmth, and glory on his wing ;
Vales, for the first time, drink the genial light,
And crimsoned sea-waves quiver with delight.
Now gathering force and volume, Music plies
Her loftiest task to hail him up the skies ;

* We need scarcely, perhaps, observe that the Oratorio of the Creation was written less in accordance with scientific truth, than in conformity to the popular notions prevailing on the great subject of which it treats. We are called on to admire the music, and not censure the announcements, because in some respects opposed to the verities of geology and astronomy.

Out, bold and strong, the deep-mouthed hautboys break,
Bassoons pour thunder, cornets mellowing speak ;
Anon, the kettle-drums, time-measuring, crash,
Clarions ring sweetness, silver cymbals clash ;
High over all, with lordly voice that tells
Of power and doom, the solemn trumpet swells ;
Its peal, up, up shrill echoing, seems to reach
The clouds, the sky, an angel's awful speech :
The chorus, hundred-voiced, too, soundeth out,
Greeting the sun—a deep, melodious shout.
Now sink, now swell, the rushing waves of sound,
That glorious music-storm still deepening round :
The soul confesseth rapture passing words,
The heart is stirred through all its answering chords,
And while the lip is mute, the eye flows o'er,
And music can achieve, can ask no more.

Thus triumphs Art ; yet oft we feel there lies
A spell that knits us closer to the skies,
In vocal melody, a pathos there,
Language of soul, proud Science may not share.
Man frames his tuneful instruments, but Heaven
Formed dulcet throats, impassioned voice has given :
Thought, mind, and intense feeling, live and burn,
Emitting light from song's celestial urn :

Gesture, and speaking brow, and eye's keen ray,
Give force and meaning to the soul-breathed lay;
Voice quickest reaches sympathy's deep spring,
And, truest to warm fancy, seems to bring
The silver echo of the choral hymn,
Poured through charmed skies by burning seraphim.

The gift of voice—its sweeter, finer power,
Wealth passing gold, is Woman's glorious dower;
Hers the pure organ that each key can suit,
Sweet as the harp, and tender as the flute.
By warbled notes what conquests hath she made!
Enthralling notes, scarce asking Beauty's aid
To call around us visions of the skies,
And wake, in wintry hearts, Love's summer-sighs.

Oh! at some stilly eve, when sunbeams rest,
Rich sky-dropped jewels, on warm Nature's breast,
And winds steal off, in closing flowers to sleep,
And Love's white star first trembles o'er the deep,
To hear from Beauty's lips, unaided, flow
The song of praise, for blessings showered below,
Her clear voice mounting still, from note to note,
As bulbuls made their bower within that throat—
Well may we stand entranced, and feel the lay
Lift us from earth, and chase earth's thoughts away.

Such song oft melts on Baiæ's twilight shore,
When waters, to love-whispers, hush their roar,
Wooring and kissing the white shells, that seem
To blush to pink, beneath the vermeil beam.
Hark ! from flower'd myrtle-groves, made richly dim
By sunset's gold, the plaintive Ave-hymn !
The sounds float up the tranquil, beam-ruled sky,
Melodious prayer, a wandering spirit's sigh,
Incense of soul paid back by man to God,
As flowers breathe grateful odours from the sod.
The fisher stays his oar those strains to hear,
His rude heart softening, on his cheek a tear ;
Their tremulous echoes creep from cave to cave,
And linger lovingly on each flushed wave,
While Nereids quick ascend their coral stairs,
To catch the earth-born lay, more sweet than theirs.

So Catalani once all hearts could bind,
And, with her vocal magic, charm mankind :
So Malibran, whose name sad fate endears,
With draughts of sound intoxicated ears ;
And he who heard the song of Sweden's maid,
Melodious Lind, whose wreath shall never fade—
Song scarcely mortal in its wondrous flow,
As if some seraph, dropping here below,

Entered that favoured breast, and poured out there
Her sky-tuned soul upon our duller air—
He who had heard, would ne'er through life resign
The memory of those warblings, half divine,
But treasure them—taste's golden miser-store—
And on their echo dwell, for evermore.

O music! beautiful thy starr'd career!
Gladdening the sad, and softening the severe;
Cherished in lands, the shivering home of snows,
And where Love twines the myrtle and the rose!
Wealth may enjoy Art's feast, more rich, more choice,
The poor man, in all Nature, hears thy voice:
The glad stream murmurs, and the wild bird sings,
For all earth's children—landless serfs as kings.
The tasteful Beauty, listening to thy lay,
Bends from her bower, and sighs her soul away:
The beggar, as the village strain pipes loud,
Forgets his griefs, the insults of the proud,
And, stirred by songs that charmed him when a boy,
Smiles o'er his crutch, and yields his heart to joy.
In simple efforts, or grand bursts of skill,
Thy magic wakes one feeling—pleasure still.
Bliss from thee draws more bliss, and woe's bowed
mind,
In sympathetic airs, a balm can find.

The saint, the worldling, here united see !
Both own thy spell, both bless sweet harmony.
Heaven gave thee to enliven life's dull road ;
But not alone is Earth thy bright abode ;
May not sweet sounds, through media none can tell,
Vibrate above, where airy spirits dwell ?
Shall not the Deity who bids below,
For ingrate man, thy billows, Music ! flow,
Much more, through golden lands beyond the spheres,
Pour the rich tide in sinless angels' ears ?—
Oh ! what may yield more rapture to the blest,
Folding their snow-pure wings in bowers of rest,
Than grateful songs and harpings, which shall rise,
Filling for ever God's bright paradise,
In sweetness passing every mortal strain,
As Heaven excels our world of woe and pain ?

I saw a vision—'twas a radiant form
High standing on a hill, where, soft and warm,
The last rich rays of loving Evening slept ;
Her crimsoned robes the crimsoned mountain swept ;
Her brow, as carved in stone, arched smooth and fair,
Celestial calm, not passion, mirrored there.
A fresh green wreath of olive crowned her head,
Down to her heel her soft, ringed tresses spread,

Each hair in sunset's blaze a thread of gold,
And brighter glowing, as the curls unrolled.
Her hand a pencil held, and oft her eye
Glanced tow'rd the Eden of that gorgeous sky,
Where towers, and cherubim-defended walls,
And fruited trees, and amber waterfalls,
And vistas for the flight of gold-plumed Day,
Seemed blent in flushing glory far away—
In crimson, flushing glory—Beauty's maze,
Earth, sky, all melted to one ruby-blaze.

Those tints she caught and treasured, for on hues
Her spirit fed, as fairies live on dews.
Now would she mark bright forms, and landscapes near,
The grand, the wild, the beauteous, or severe :
Rock-girded glen, hoar watch-tower on the hill,
The moss-grown bridge that spann'd the osiered rill,
The rustic beauty, and the plodding swain,
The sheep, like white clouds fallen on the plain—
All drew her gaze, till smiles illumed her cheek,
For though she soared so high, her heart was meek.
Hers was the happy task to please, refine,
To copy Nature, yet bid fancy shine,
To fix on canvas tints that soon will fly,
To make, enduring, features that must die,

And myriads yet unborn, to charm, to bless,
With scenes long past, and dreams of loveliness—
Sweet Nymph of Painting ! fairest child of earth !
Young Grace harped in, and Wonder hailed thy birth.

Since old Cleanthes marked his circling line,
In rude attempt to trace man's form divine,*
And Egypt's artist fadeless colours threw
On granite walls, but shapes unsightly drew,
Down to the age when Titian's brush of flame,
And Raphael's genius reared a tower of fame,
And Claude from Nature light and glory stole,
And Rosa awed, and Reynolds charmed the soul,
What varied beauty, grandeur, gods might own,
On Art's broad canvas, burning, have been thrown !
What thoughts, what aspirations, hopes and fears,
What happy, wreathing smiles, pathetic tears,
Have there found bodiment ! Man surely lives
A second life, through all bright Painting gives ;
For that which stirs within and sways the mind,
Her spell can fix, with magic fetters bind.
Oh ! pure, calm joys to Painting owe their birth ;
She centres, lens-like, loveliest scenes of earth,

* According to the legend, Cleanthes of Corinth made the first outline, Telephanes and Ardices introduced other artistic lines, and Cleophrantus prepared and laid on the first colour.

Calls, from the depths of time, events, and men,
And fires with life a by-gone world again,
Yields more than poetry, which moulds but thought,
For here the substance lives, the form is caught.
Yes! painting is the poetry of eye;
Rich tint the verse, and shade the harmony.
Viewing her wondrous, imitative art,
In Taste's warm breast what grateful feelings start!
We only mourn that slow-corroding Time,
Which wears to dust man's works, howe'er sublime,
Must sweep those lines, and beauteous hues at last,
Making them dreams, and memories of the past.

Yet little Art achieved in pristine years;
Slowly her tower Perfection ever rears.
Art dawned at length, and rude night left behind,
Her golden sunshine filled the realms of mind.
No rank, no intellect, but draws delight
From glorious painting, feasting soul and sight.
O'er Zeuxis' canvas, where all tints were flung,
All beauties mirrored, Greece enraptured hung;
Sweet feelings, flashed from hearts, Parrhasius drew,
Caught the fine soul, and fixed it in a hue,
Apelles' Venus witching every eye,
Pleased admiration gushing in a sigh.

But not in Greece Art reached meridian height,
'Twas 'neath Ausonia's skies of tenderer light,
Where streams ran clearer, bloomier valleys spread,
And denser forests greened the mountain's head ;
Where beauty seemed to stand, and draw her line
By winding shore, and swelling Apennine ;
And fancy, love, and pleasure, reigned supreme,
And woman's eye shot forth a heavenlier beam ;
Religion, too, raised Art, and, as she passed,
Her gorgeous mantle on its votaries cast—
Great seers of taste, Apostles of design,
Arch-hierophants at Nature's taintless shrine.
Then Raphael rose, and breathed angelic grace
Round Heaven's blest "Child," and each Madonna's
face ;
His sweet, sweet sadness, where love's soul appears,
Wakes loftiest fancies, softening into tears.
Da Vinci came, in learning's stole arrayed,
Dante of painters, lord of light and shade ;
Men, zealous pilgrims, sought that convent wall
His pencil hallowed—Genius ! weep its fall.*
But Angelo, who mightier powers combined,
With wonder's torrent shall o'erflood the mind ;

* One of the most famous works of Leonardo da Vinci was his "Last Supper," painted on the wall of the refectory of the convent Madonna della Grazie : it gradually fell to decay, and was entirely destroyed in the time of the French Revolution.

Such soul, like Homer's, earth but once supplies,
The Jove of Art, high throned amidst its skies :
In him august conception, grandeur, meet ;
Enter yon dome—Religion's, Music's seat,
Radiant on high his proud creations see !
Soft beauty wed to stern sublimity.*
Now let Piombo chase each lighter thought,
While picturing death, with hope and glory fraught :
Behold that slow-reviving, languid frame !
Steals back to opening eyes life's doubtful flame ;
Soul, late in Hades, wakes, resumes its sway ;
How true, how wondrous, all the dread display ! †
We freeze, yet dwell enchained on that dark hour,
Fixed by the magic of the painter's power.

What mean those rainbows and rich clouds of morn,
Robbed from the sky ? the blush by forests worn,
When Autumn-winds incarnadine the leaves—
Hues of each summer-flower Love's finger weaves ?
The living, speaking glory of the whole,
As if each line, each tint, were rife with soul ?—

* Michael Angelo's frescoes on the roof of the Sistine Chapel, embodying the history of the Antediluvian world, rank among his greatest achievements.

† The magnificent picture of the "Raising of Lazarus," by Sebastian del Piombo, now in our National Gallery.

'Tis Titian's art—his brush a fairy's wing,
Colour's great master, bold expression's king !
Oh ! canst thou see his Venus glowing there—
Cold Northmen scarce could *dream* a form so fair—
Nor bend, by so much loveliness o'erpowered,
A rain of beauty on thy senses showered ?—
Gaze, myriads, gaze ! to each revealed shall be
Some hidden grace, the last had failed to see.—
Come with Salvator, Nature's rugged child,
And visit, fancy-led, the stern and wild !
See on the canvas savage pictures rise—
A black ravine o'erarched by thunderous skies ;
The torrent whitening through the mountain-pass,
Gray hanging rocks, high crowned by pines and grass ;
The robber lurking in the twilight cave,
Shipwrecked Despair upon the foaming wave—
And say, stern truthfulness can here impart
A law as potent to enthrall the heart,
As sweet creations, though we still applaud,
All steeped in light by Poussin, or by Claude,
Where Nature, one rich Eden, basks in bliss,
And earth seems too near Heav'n for earth like this.

So shine a few who reached fame's dazzling goal,
Stars large and brilliant in the heaven of soul.

But while they toiled with weary hand and eye,
Think they were sad, or laboured but to sigh ?
No, in their lofty tasks a joy they found,
That made life's thorniest road enchanted ground.
Ah ! who may tell, though small his squalid room,
Though study rob his cheek of health's fresh bloom,
And poverty's gaunt fiend a frown may wear,
And bright-faced friendship pour no sunshine there,
What raptures thrill the painter ?—Slow design,
Light, shade, harmonious colour—every line
Yields its peculiar pleasure ; now to see
A half formed mountain rise, and now a tree,
Shapes grow from vagueness, skies put on their blue,
Till the whole glowing landscape swells to view—
It all repays the long, long studious hour,
Though he may win no honour, wealth, or power.
The wreath let Genius pass not scornful by,
But ne'er for empty plaudits weakly sigh :
Art yields its own reward, and kindly seems
To lap the votary's soul in happiest dreams ;
Art's genuine child will toil to latest breath,
Nature but dimmed, his love but quenched by death.

So young Giotto, 'midst his mountain sheep,
Sketched his rude forms, and felt his bosom leap ;

Ecstatic fancies real misery chased,
And turned to paradise the dreary waste.
So Opie, where bleak Cornwall's hills of pride
Battle with storms, his magic pencil plied ;
Rough, wild, untutored, genius' inborn fire
Urged him to tasks whose raptures ne'er could tire ;
He knew but one delight—his joy the same,
When honour crowned with bays his humble name.

Painting ! if only we might gain through thee
The simple portrait, blest thine art should be.
When called by fate, in distant climes to dwell,
Bidding to those we love a long farewell,
The faithful portrait still is smiling near,
To soothe regret, and dry the falling tear.
And ah ! if, doubly bitter, death lay low
A parent, child, or her most prized below,
Though earth shall claim the fair and worshipped clay,
And all that charmed us once, must pass away—
Pass, like sweet music in a fairy dream,
Or vale-embracing rainbow's broken beam—
Still can we see restored, by Painting's power,
The dear loved form of life's more happy hour,
The wreathing lip, dark hair, or eye of blue,
Where the soul lingers, mirrored sweetly true ;

Still may bend o'er, and kiss that treasured face,
Recall the lost one's voice, and nameless grace ;
Those gentle lips do all but move and speak,
Or, nearer placed, do all but kiss our cheek ;
Those loving arms, so life-like there they lie,
Might clasp our neck, till death half seems to fly,
And the dear partner of youth's joyous years
Comes back once more, and chides our fruitless tears.

But Painting hath her sister—Rise, and see
A being glorious, beautiful as she !
No hue may stain her robe, more cold than warm
Her dignified, severe, and classic form ;
She wins by simple loveliness, and stands
With drooping naked arms, and gemless hands ;
No flowers make gay her massy, braided hair ;
A sweet solemnity her features wear.
No jewels, darting love-rays, twine her neck,
Her snow-white feet no gaudy sandals deck ;
Thought prompts each gesture, and around her throws
An intellectual charm of deep repose.
Her power, her brilliancy, in stillness lie,
Like cloud-wombed lightning sleeping in the sky
Her form embodied poetry, she sways,
Not, like rich Painting, by warm colour's blaze,

Nor views, with raptured vision, witchery thrown
O'er Nature's paths—her empire "mind" alone.
Sculpture, the beautiful, is breathing soul,
Yet human feelings each chaste look control ;
Passion is hers, etherealised, subdued,
Though more she loves the calm, the pensive mood ;
Pity and grief can soften the severe,
And adoration pour the holy tear.
She looks a glorious Priestess by her shrine,
The incarnation of some dream divine ;
And gazing on her, lofty, pure, and bright,
We grow exalted, while we own delight,
Less ravished than by Painting's radiant face,
But more enthralled by form, and soul, and grace.

Goddess of Sculpture ! in young Greece she shed
Her heavenliest smile, and spirits captive led ;
Painting woo'd Italy, but Sculpture pressed
Her lips on Greece, a sky-born, loving guest.—
How dim a beam did Art on Persia throw,
And mystic Ind !—old Egypt, patient, slow,
Might carve colossal shapes, and grandly raise
Her gods in stone, to brave eternal days ;
Assyria, too, gave dazzling wonders birth,
Fantastic dreams, perplexing sons of earth ;

But 'tis in Greece, ere time quenched genius' ray,
We hail form's majesty, and soul's display,
True worship of high beauty, cultured taste,
Nature's pure law, invention bold and chaste ;
These, like a halo from mind's planet caught,
Rested on all the Greek's fine chisel wrought—
The secret that embalmed each glorious name,
Linked to great works of earth-enduring fame.
And still, though Science, Wisdom, hold sublime
Their onward march, and giants grow with time,
The sculptor turns to Greece, and findeth there
The ideal realised, the grand, the fair ;
And, sighing for perfection, Art must still
Glow with the Greek, and quaff the Attic rill.
Oh ! wondrous force of soul, which thus can give
Passion to inert stone, and bid it live,
Immortal in its loveliness, when they
Who wove the charm, are cold and trampled clay.

What feel we, gazing on the line of grace,
Faultless and pure, a Phidias loved to trace,
Throwing his soul in each bold-sculptured form,
Till veins dilate with life, and lips seem warm ?*

* See the Elgin Marbles.

Or Glycon's Hercules, where power is made
To blend with ease, like happiest light and shade ? *
Lo ! where the gladiator stoops to die, †
With visage sad, yet breast that heaves no sigh,
Conquered, but conquering fear, the late strong limb
Relaxed and faint—the shadow, cold and dim,
That seems to wrap the very dying stone—
Silent, yet making the fixed gazer moan,
In sorrow for the fate of one so brave,
Doomed, in strange land, to fill a stranger's grave.
Behold the Phrygian Father, ‡ with fierce pang
Writhing out life, beneath the serpent's fang !
His arm vain raised in wrath, at Heaven's decree,
Each quivering fibre a deep agony ;
What wordless woe on that contracted brow !
The wild heaved bosom furies maddening now ;
And oh ! the anguish to behold each son,
Tortured like him, death-doomed, god-curs'd, undone—
Anguish which throws 'round limb, and nerve, and
vein,
A grand despair, an atmosphere of pain.

* The Farnese Hercules at Naples is attributed to Glycon and Apollonius.

† The celebrated statue, called the "Fighting Gladiator," was found among the ruins of a villa that had belonged to Nero at Antium: the sculptor's name is unknown.

‡ The Laocoon.

But mark the god, on love's sweet pastime bent,
Tiny in form, in might omnipotent,
Flashed by Praxiteles to marble life,
The cheek, the lip, the brow, with meaning rife—*
Bright personation of all-conquering love,
Steeping our souls in visions from above,
Now urging hearts to madness, crime, and woe,
At once a curse, a blessing, here below.
Those rounded limbs glow soft as passion's dream,
Those wings, like feathers pruned by Venus, gleam ;
As made for kissing, pout those lips so sweet,
Mirth on the chin, and frolic in the feet.
Oh ! lovely vision of poetic times !
Such ne'er might spring to birth in colder climes—
Cupid, that mocks Olympus' Heaven-feared sire,
Breaking with boyish hands the bolts of fire,
His wings, his arrows tipp'd with nectared pain—
The burning fancy of a Southern brain.

These matchless works of long-departed years
Awake in turn smiles, pity, love, and tears :
Why pleased ? it boots not—'tis enough we feel
Lofty or sweet emotions o'er us steal :

* The Cupid, preserved in the Vatican at Rome, enjoys the celebrity of having been the work of Praxiteles.

The truthfulness, the' harmonious grace, the fire,
Clothe stone with soul, and bid all hearts admire,
And plastic genius, charming through the eyes,
Turns air-bred dreams to grand realities.

Yet not alone shall Grecian sculptors raise
A world of beauty, to enchant all days ;
Fresh from the sleep of mediæval years,
Woke by strong spells, sweet Art again appears.
Great Angelo, Prometheus' daring given,
To' inspire the marble, life-flame steals from Heaven :
Taste shall exult Canova's works to see,
There glows the languor of soft Italy,
Blent with Athenian vigour, Phidias' ease
Marrying the warmth of pure Praxiteles.
Banks moulds to life the bold, mind-breathing face,
While Chantry fascinates by airy grace :
And studious Flaxman hath the mantle caught
From Attic masters : fervour, passion, thought,
Robing the marble, his chaste, classic mind
Severely simple, powerful yet refined.
See Æschylus' and Dante's gorgeous dreams
Burn in his groupings, rich with fancy-beams ! *

* For the Countess Spenser and Mr. Hope, Flaxman composed his exquisite series of Illustrations in connection with the works of Æschylus and Dante.

His works gave virtue joy, and heavenly love
Breathed o'er his forms pure beauty born above ;
Religion, by his genius, holier shone,
And Sorrow, at his bidding, wailed in stone.*
Green bloom the laurels, Flaxman ! round thy name,
High niched for ever in the shrine of fame ;
And she, with glowing heart, thy faithful wife,
Who lightened toil, made sunshine of thy life,
Joyed in thy joy, and loved thee without guile,
Shall by thy side, an honoured angel, smile.†

We feel strange pleasure in beholding woe
Its veil of pathos, o'er the marble, throw.
Enter yon Royal shrine, where Honour stands
With bare drooped head, and Sorrow clasps her hands
Above the tomb of kings ; where banners fall,
As waved by Death, o'er each emblazoned stall,
And rich red rays through painted windows stream,
A seraph's smile in every mellowing beam.
The flute-like voice, the holy chanted prayer,
No more religion's heaven are breathing there ;
No more the organ rolls deep waves of sound
Along the fretted roof, and vaulted ground ;

* See his beautiful monuments to Mrs. Morley in Gloucester Cathedral, to Lord Mansfield, Sir W. Jones, and others.

† Flaxman married Ann Denman, who was his amiable and affectionate companion for thirty-eight years.

The banners of the great droop darkly still,
And silence reigns with tomb-like, icy thrill,
Save when ye hear the foot-fall, or the sigh
Of mournful musers, slowly pacing by,
Dreaming, perchance, of royal forms below,
If e'er their eyes wept tears, their hearts knew woe,
And feeling, 'mid their glory, pomp, and state,
Kings are but mortals, Queens must yield to fate.

She trod this spot in buoyant, joyous youth,
And oft breathed here her prayer of love and truth ;
And happy England hoped to gird her throne,
With hearts more strong than shields, or walls of stone,
As England girds, this hour, fair sceptred Worth,
Gracing a throne which awes, yet gladdens earth,
The Royal Lady of the Isles of might,
Whose love as warm, and spreading too, as light,
Sends smiles from cheek to cheek ; whose wish would
shed

Blessings like dew, joy's sunshine on each head.—
The youthful Mother perished, and a knell
Rang through the land for one beloved so well ;
That knell was voiced from many a saddened heart ;
Why, Death ! at all that's lovely point thy dart ?
Grief turned to sighs the breasts of oldest men,
And tears dewed iron cheeks, ne'er wet till then.

A Nation's garnered hopes were crushed that hour,
A Nation mourned high Beauty's broken flower,
A Nation had one heart—one voice—one tear,
For her whose bridal couch was now her bier.

Pause, for a marble glory meets thine eye,
Fair as a cloud in Summer's fairest sky,
But sad its still magnificence ; we draw
In admiration near, yet speechless awe ;
The sense at first is dazzled, and we bless
Genius embodying angel loveliness ;
Spell-bound we view this triumph of pure Art,
Enchanting soul, while bidding tear-drops start ;
But soon a feeling deep, subdued, and calm,
Falls on the spirit, like assuasive balm ;
A heavenly dream the Sculptor* shadows here,
The happy chisel graceful while severe ;

* Matthew Cotes Wyatt. The celebrated group of sculpture in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and of which an inadequate description is attempted above, embodies a very bold and original conception. Death and immortality—the perished frame and liberated soul are, at the same instant of time, presented to the view. The royal sufferer is supposed just to have expired, and the soul, palpable to our senses, is springing buoyantly above, while the infant is consigned to angels. Some artists and connoisseurs have pronounced this beautiful and extraordinary piece of sculpture to be “melodramatic,” and in very “questionable taste ;” a ground of objection also seems to be that certain conventional laws, which have long obtained, are here violated ; but if by such violation, the artist is enabled to produce the effect he desires, and to touch the feelings of every spectator by the overwhelming pathos of his design, then let us not condemn,

The holy fancy charms the wondering gaze,
And with each look we give, new beauties blaze ;
As, in the depths of blue, more stars we trace,
The longer searching vision dwells on space.—
There sleeps the fair young Mother, hushed her breath,
Cold on her bier—how beautiful in death !
Her limbs beneath that marble drapery lie,
Marked yet unseen, veiled too her death-closed eye,
But from the folds one hand of stainless snow—
Poor, pulseless, icy hand—is drooping low ;
That hand a tale of suffering seems to tell,
And mutely, sadly, speak a long farewell ;
'Tis eloquent of woe, and lips might press
Its languid cold, so sweet its lifelessness :
E'en they, on bended knee, with low-bowed head,
Mourning in still dumb grief the' unconscious dead,*
Touch less the heart than that frail hand of white ;
Ye gaze and gaze, till tears make dim the sight.

O Mother of an hour ! her peace is deep,
Her anguish o'er, in that long, dreamless sleep ;
She heeds not husband's groan, or father's tear ;
A Nation's cry is silence to that ear—

but admire, bestowing our applause upon the innovator in art, as warmly as if he had achieved excellence by adhering to time-honoured classic rule.

* Four female figures, covered with drapery, are represented mourning around the couch or bier.

Heeds not the child her late fond bosom bore,
The child she madly kissed, till life was o'er.
An angel now, white pitier of frail clay,
Receives that babe, death's taintless, sinless prey :
Ne'er shall it view earth's pomp, weep, smile below ;
It rests in snowy arms, pure lifeless snow,
To follow her who bore it—hapless doom !
The parent stalk and flower in one cold tomb.
But see above the couch that glory spring !
Body yet soul—a glad, triumphant thing !
Dew to the sun, from hallow'd altars fire
Rising to God, might brightly so aspire.
The spirit seeks yon sky, whence flashed the flame
That warmed at first the mundane, beauteous frame ;
Daughter unstained ! her one sweet fault—a worth—
A purity too pure for this our earth.
Thrice beautiful that mounting soul in stone !
Ethereal grace, a halo round it thrown ;
Like the soft light which girds the morning star,
Melting and fainting in the blue afar.
It looks as craving God's deep rest above,
Each hope-lit feature beaming heavenly love.
See where those golden hues are softly shed
By slanting sunrays, on the' angelic head !
They tint the cheek, and, quivering on her form,
Appear, with life again, that breast to warm :

In fancy's eye, as those rich colours glow,
Heaven's gates of jasper seem to open slow,
Revealing there joy's bright, eternal goal,
While angels welcome that ascending soul.

Hail ! Music, Painting, Sculpture ! glorious three !
Close knit by chords of happiest harmony :
Music, a language by all creatures heard,
Whether of harp or brook, man's voice or bird,
From order, love, and feeling, drew its birth,
And, sent by Heaven, brings Heaven more near to earth :
Its charm arrests the infant's wondering ear,
And when Age bids farewell to all that's dear,
He clasps his hands, and lifts his failing eyes,
Fancying he catches harpings from the skies.—
Painting and Sculpture, sister Nymphs, bestow,
E'en while embodying life and dreams below,
More beauty on the beautiful, and fling
O'er the dull real, fancy's rainbow-wing.
In feasts of sense let grovellers pleasure find,
These spread a banquet for the nobler mind :
We bless the arts whose magic can restore
Scenes passed away, and forms beheld no more,
Immortalise all Love and Beauty gave,
Defeat e'en death, and triumph o'er the grave.

PLEASURE.



BOOK IV.

AMBITION—MILITARY GLORY—STATESMANSHIP—
LITERATURE.

WHAT bliss have thousands felt, since Earth's young
hour,

In climbing fame's proud steep, and grasping power !
One wish incites, one law the spirit binds—
Man still, in swaying man, a pleasure finds.
The despot thrills with selfish joy to see
Princes kiss earth, and chieftains bend the knee :
Prince, chief, with pride and exultation glow,
Leading the mass, and awing crowds below ;
While slaves, in happy dreams, will hope the day
When, raised to lords, they, too, their slaves shall sway :

All, all would mount, as flame ascends the skies ;
All chase some good, all seek some distant prize.

Ambition's visions—do they curse or bless ?
To countless minds power seems but happiness.
What were a Cæsar, doomed to muse at home,
Not trampling foes in dust, nor shaking Rome ?
A lonely, joyless man ; but wild delight
He snatched from war, and danger's darkest night,
So they led onwards, upwards, to a throne,
Where hope, unheeding thorns, sees flowers alone.
How felt a Wolsey, reft of smiles from kings,
And all the incense wealth or flatt'ry brings ?
As sad as blest before, when fortune's eyes
Beamed on his path, like light from paradise.—
A mountain gazing ever on the sky,
As wishing, though high raised, to tower more high,
Scorning the greenery of fresh-waving woods,
And scented heaths, and Naiad-haunted floods ;
A mountain that when Morn, with bride-like grace,
Trips from the East, ne'er smiles to meet her face,
Nor softens when Day dies, and clouds of gold,
Like drooping angel-wings, his bier enfold,
But still looks up, a stern dark Titan, bent
On scaling heav'n, and frowns in discontent.—

Such is Ambition in the world of mind ;
So towers Ambition's votary o'er his kind,
Spurns 'mid his daring aims, his glory-strife,
The gentler pleasures, fairer scenes of life,
A gloomy, selfish rapture, doomed to know—
Rapture oft wrung from guilt, and others' woe.

What stirred the' Archangel in the realms of light,
To lift his brow, and dare the Infinite ?
Till, from Heaven's starry thrones and bowers of bliss,
By vengeance hurled, he sank in hell's abyss,
There, first in torture, if in might, to reign,
Forged for eternity his fiery chain—
What but Ambition ? the poor worm would rise,
And with Creation's lord dispute the skies.

Pervading Spirit ! who may trace thy power,
Felt in each land, and colouring life's long hour ?
Delirious joy thy hopes, thy longings bring,
Inspiring now a peasant, now a king.
The polished chief, who sweeps his conquering way,
And climbs o'er toppling thrones, a world to sway ;
The feathered savage battling with his band,
To rule a town of huts, on Afric's sand ;
The statesman crushing rivals, crafty, keen ;
The boor who wrestles on the village green—

All own thy spells, unconscious though they be,
Their springs of pleasure cent'ring all in thee.

Yet Spirit ! whose strong yearnings fill the breast
With ceaseless fever, and with wild unrest,
The source of myriad woes—not all a ban,
Thy wide-spread shadow falls on struggling man.
There's brightness 'mid the gloom that wraps thy form,
As iris-tints with splendour lace the storm ;
There's beauty on thy brow, no ills can hide,
As flow'rets deck the dread volcano's side.

Say, but for pure Ambition's nobler aim,
To grasp more wisdom, gain an honoured name,
How darkly man would drag inglorious days,
Reckless of mind's improvement, deaf to praise !
In walks of art, in science, and in lore,
Warm emulation would inspire no more,
The flag of drooping Genius would be furled,
And Progress cease her march throughout the world.
Aye, with no dreams that rise, no hopes that burn,
No wishes to a loftier sphere that turn,
Our souls were souls no more ; our lives would be
Dreary and stagnate as that breezeless sea,
Which spreads o'er Sodom in its mournful rest,
Gloom on its shore, and silence on its breast.

Of all the forms Ambition wears below,
Conquest, Death's daughter, spreads the widest woe.
Some heroes dare great deeds for present sway,
Their fierce aspirings bounded by to-day ;
Some drive o'er ravaged lands war's blood-stained car,
Fixing their gaze on fame's proud, glittering star ;
From memory's world they would not dream-like pass,
But shine in history, grave their names on brass.
Oh ! sad such glory ! dark such wreath appears !
Born of pale woe and suffering, nursed by tears.
Soul ! dost thou think, when past life's little span,
And all thou sought'st is won—applause from man,—
The fame, on evil based, will yield delight ?
No, rather tomb thy deeds in endless night :
Memory of anguish caused, of blood that flowed,
Of ills and crimes which darkened glory's road,
Will rise o'erwhelming, like a flood, to drown
The splendid mock'ry of a false renown ;
And what gave thrilling pleasure, now shall be
A fiery pang for all eternity.

Ye who, still smitten with a brilliant dream,
Grand and ennobling, martial glory deem,
See round the hero's head a halo shine,
And think his lofty spirit half divine,

Recall the hapless fate of ruined Tyre,*
Her streets blood-drenched, her pictured halls on fire,
Her nobles scourged, her daughters sold for slaves,
Men nailed to crosses shrieking by the waves.
Or mark how Titus, sent by grasping Rome,
That claimed all lands beneath heaven's arching dome,
Hems Salem round, till Famine and Despair
Halve, with rejoicing Death, the horrors there.

Oh ! ne'er before, from earth to shrinking skies,
Did prayers so frantic, groans so piteous rise !
Thrice happy they, who, wildly fighting, fell,
Freed from that living grave, that earthly hell,
No more to witness Salem's dire distress,
One charnel-house her ancient loveliness !
There sons from sires snatched food, and wolfish, wild,
The famished mother feasted on her child.†
The slain unburied lay, the stones their bed,
The living all too weak to tomb their dead.
Cooped in those walls, like tigers in a den,
Sank, day by day, those maddened, tortured men,
Without, a hedge of spears—despair within,
Nought left to lose, and nought, save death, to win ;

* Sacked by Alexander the Great.

† During the siege of Jerusalem, a woman of noble family, Mary, daughter of Eleazar, killed her own child and devoured it. *See Josephus.*

Then, as the wretched remnant, crushed at last,
While Rome's exulting sons the ramparts passed,
Saw their loved Temple mocked, and wrapp'd in fire—
Ruin's wild torch, Religion's funeral pyre—
They stretched their hands to Heav'n, and cursed the
sun,

Nor called men heroes, who such deeds had done ;
Nor deemed Rome's chief with deathless laurels graced ;
But pain's long groan, the land a blood-stained waste,
Seemed to declare Aggression's lord to be
The scourge of earth—the king of agony!

Yet he who war's grim shade through life pursued,
And stormy battle, like a Mistress, wooed,
All other pleasures tame beside one bliss—
To conquer and aspire, till earth were his—
Blazed upon Gaul, whose sons, through good and ill,
The twilight of his memory worship still.
A great, a generous, a progressive race,
From Glory's roll, will ne'er that name efface.
Why warred Napoleon? was it to advance,
With patriotic aim, the weal of France?
Why flew his eagles o'er far Scythia's snows?
Why pealed his trump where Nile's calm grandeur flows?
Was it mankind had suffered ill too long,
And he, the' avenger, came to banish wrong?

To crush some giant evil, punish pride,
And cleanse the world by warfare's fiery tide ?
No ; for a name, for power, a wide-spread reign,
He dared, he fought, he laboured, nor in vain ;
His country well he loved, but glory more ;
The last he hugged, as misers grasp their store ;
And heaping still that wealth, he schemed, he toiled,
More eager, danger-girt—more bold when foiled.
Without high place and fame, no slave would be,
In dungeon-gloom, so hopeless, sad as he.
In action, more than mind, this giant towered ;
Millions condemned him—thousands plaudits showered.
His joy was raising, and then crushing foes ;
His torture—the prized luxury of repose :
His feasts were battle-fields, his wine was gore,
His choicest music the dread cannon's roar.
He closed his eyes on all the woes that track
War's hideous path, ne'er daring to look back,
“Forward !” his cry, and power the all he saw,
Hoping to chain mankind, and give them law.—
Such was this soaring, grovelling, wondrous man,
And never conquering chief, since wars began,
Shook with more fearful force earth's social frame,
Twined prouder wreaths around an humble name,
Lower in dust strong thrones of ages hurled,
Or cast a darker shadow o'er the world.

Oh ! who may tell what warm and fierce delight
This hero felt, when marching to the fight ?
Beneath that calm and icy brow, the brain
Owned fiery rapture—rapture e'en to pain.
But come, behold what fortune's child could dare,
Ambition's suckling, fame's immortal heir !
Who launched, like Jove, his thunders, till they came
Back on himself, and scorched with fiercer flame ;
Oh ! come, behold the madness, pride of man,
And laud Ambition's soarings—if ye can.

Morn, with a laugh, danced down the Eastern height,
And flung from rosy fingers gems of light,
Sent gales to rob perfume from bank and bower,
And oped the pink lids of the dreaming flower ;
The wood-leaves whispered, soft as lovers' sighs,
And night-drops, sparkling, glanced like million eyes :
The dainty bee the wild thyme winged about,
As humming spells to draw its virtues out ;
The lark passed up, like prayer, to heaven's gemmed
gate,
The thrush below sang language to his mate ;
And waves, soft pouting rose-lips, kissed the shore,
And, chid by ruffled pebbles, kissed the more.
Each sight, each sound, spoke life and rapture there ;
Nature still bounds in youth, her face is fair,

Unmarked by ruin, darkness, or distress,
Till man, the spoiler, dims her loveliness.

They come, the Gallic host—that mighty crowd—
With trampling horse, and bugle echoing loud ;
Their long-drawn lines in dazzling order march,
Aloft each banner waves—a rainbow-arch :
In morn's quick beam the groves of lances flash,
O'er mead, through rill, the' impetuous horsemen dash ;
Out, earth-born thunder, sounds the doubling drum,
Squadron on squadron pours, and still they come.
Where now the flower, the stream, the bird of heaven ?
Laid low in dust, polluted, terror-driven ;
The' industrial bee no more her labour plies,
Eden in front—behind a desert lies ;
And on, and on, the human billows roll,
Pride on each brow, and fire in every soul.

Napoleon northward leads this vast array,
Burning for laurels, confident as gay ;
No gloomy dreams hope's sunny hour disturb,
Their hearts all bounding as the steeds they curb ;
They might not see, above them hovering there,
Stern, fleshless death—the spectre of despair,
Waiting to hurl the dart, and ruthless grasp
The form, now joyous, in his icy clasp.

Exult, great warrior ! view thy host with pride,
Power beckoning on, Aggression by thy side !
Gay soldiers ! bid a long, a last farewell
To laughing skies, flower'd hill, and streamy dell ;
Starvation, slaughter, numbing frost, must be
Your valour's meed, the fate ye may not flee ;
But reck not—raise your cheer—your clarions blow !
March, soldiers ! march ! and burn to front your foe ;
Lay countries waste !—so heroes win their fame—
Mow nations down !—'tis war's tremendous game !

There's merriment in Moscow's ancient halls,
Where madly revel the victorious Gauls ;
Ho ! this is glory ! green their laurels bloom ;
Here will they rest, and brave grim Winter's gloom.
Napoleon's name with dread each Northman fills,
And Scythia trembles on her ice-bound hills.
But pale grows now the hero's trusted star,
And fate's black clouds are rolling dun afar.
Hark to the cry of fire !—mad voices shout ;
Like snakes of vengeance, red-tongued flames break out,
Wreath vault and dome, and course from street to
street ;
Ye hear the hiss, the rush of flying feet ;

And oft, 'mid some dread pause, with sudden flash,
Bell-laden, burning towers, down tottering, crash :
O'er works of Art, o'er treasures none may save,
Sweeps a red-surfing sea, the fiery wave.
Destruction holds high carnival, and Fear
Mutters her charm, and shakes her hell-locks here.

With folded arms, and sullen, thoughtful eye,
Napoleon viewed the terrors light the sky ;
So Priam gazed o'er Troy ; the' Imperial Gaul
Read his own fate in blazing Moscow's fall.
Not Scythia had subdued him ; serf and slave
Quailed to the free—to Gallia's matchless brave,
Cossack, and Russ, and troops from countless lands,
Scattered, like chaff, before his whirlwind-bands ;
But elements brought ruin ; dire mischance,
Conquering the conqueror, broke the sword of France.
Then sank his lion heart, his head droop'd low,
Graved on that pondering brow, dark lines of woe ;
Truth to his spirit spoke—Truth thunder-toned,
While foiled Ambition inly writhed and groaned.

The scene has changed—no flames we now behold,
But wide, wide plains, where broods the demon Cold ;
His spells have turned the rill, the lake, to stone,
One robe of white on chained creation thrown.

Winter hath giv'n hoar Desolation birth ;
The heavens frown black upon the ermined earth ;
No woods, no cattled pastures, cheer the eye,
And gales, like sharpened swords, sweep freezing by ;
Checked in its course, the heart-blood wanders weak,
And tears that start hang frozen on the cheek.

See ! where gaunt men are dragging, feebly slow,
Their wasted limbs through drifting waves of snow—
Pale skeletons, just animated Deaths,
Life faintly spoken by their white-drawn breaths ;
The mournful ghosts on Stygian shores that stray,
Can scarce more shadowy look, more sad than they.
In scattered groups, those soldiers totter on,
Resolve, and discipline, and spirit gone,
With faces tow'rd their homes—sweet hill or glen—
The far dear haunts they ne'er shall see again.
Starvation added to their dire distress,
Each looks at each—incarnate wretchedness !
Horses are slaughtered, Nature's wants to meet,
Belts, shoes are gnawed—they march with naked
feet ;
Frozen the lip, the lean hand weak and numb,
Mute is the fife, and hushed the once loud drum ;
Arms are cast useless down, for men no more
Can point the tube, or bid the cannon roar ;

So frail, so faint, a breeze to earth can throw
The late strong warrior, soon engulfed in snow ;
Powerless he lies, while stupor, strange and deep,
All feeling fled, foreruns eternal sleep.

Hovering in clouds, doomed stragglers to destroy,
Sweeping like whirlwinds, murdering in wild joy,
Their hardy steeds the fiery Cossacks wheel,
And drive, in men half dead, the vengeful steel.
But harrowing more, a scene more full of fear,
Behold that suffering army's tortured rear !
There banners, guns, and all war's grand array,
In wild confusion, strew the desert-way :
Those who can march no more, bow down to die,
And breathe to pitiless winds the fruitless sigh ;
The sinking ranks to countless thousands grow,
With none to help, and none to soothe their woe ;
There beasts of prey, fierce howling, gather round,
Tearing the snow-tombed victims from the ground ;
And carrion birds flap slow the heavy wing,
As loath to leave their joyous banqueting ;
All, all is there we shrink to name or see,
That wrings the heart, and shocks humanity.

Apart a veteran leant, proud valour's son,
Who many a noble deed in fight had done,

Long followed plume-crowned war, and him whose
name

Shook the wide world, and filled thy trumpet, Fame!
Now, vict'ry's raptures fled, unlaurelled, low,
Helpless and dying on his bed of snow,
Sad, humbling, seemed his fate, and crushed him more
Than all the pangs his tortured body bore.
And had he worshipped glory's star for this?
Fame might be others' meed, but woe was his:
Yet o'er that anguish burst the soldier's pride,
And "*Vive l'Emp'reur!*" the veteran faintly cried,
Owned at that hour the strong-enchaining spell
Napoleon wove for hearts, and wove so well.
But as cold death drew nearer, glory's light
Faded like baseless dreams that mock the night:
Another vision rapt his saddened mind,
While low on shivering hands his head reclined;
His eye closed slowly, but the eye of soul
And fancy brightened, spite of death's control.

Far from that wintry plain he seemed to fly,
Above him arched a glowing Autumn sky;
His native Rhône's wave-music soothed his ear;
He trod the haunts, to miser memory dear;
The jocund song of happy vintage-hours
Rang from the purple hills, and bloomy bowers;

Delicious warmth made Eden of the earth,
That hymned for gratitude, and laughed for mirth.
Before his cot, with Province roses gay,
Bent at her wheel the wife of youth's fond day,
While joyful near, beneath the olive shade,
His daughters danced, and village children played.
The hamlet fathers, they who late to fame
Sent forth their hero, proudly spoke his name :
Then rose his Maude with love-enkindled eye,
Praised him and bless'd, but turned to check a sigh ;
His hopeful children, gathering 'round to cheer,
Laughed off misgivings, kissed away her tear,
Till smiles, at thoughts of meeting, seemed to break,
Like beams on banks of roses, o'er her cheek.

Oh, Fancy! charm him yet, keep back truth's night,
Pour on crushed Misery's heart ideal light !
Chase, chase the dread reality, and throw
One drop of rapture in his cup of woe !

The spell dissolves ; his glazed eye wanders 'round ;
Where is the Rhône ? where each sweet sight and
 sound ?
Cold, hunger, snow, are all he feels and sees,
While Death's pale angel moans in every breeze.

Ah ! Peace, how lovely now her form appears !
How hideous, War ! dire lord of woe and tears !
He curses, all too late, the fiend that brings
Hell's wrath and gloom, to mar earth's fairest things,
Deems worse than crime Ambition's march, that lies
To power and fame, through human agonies,
Blesses the home his eye shall ne'er survey,
Sinks on the waste, and groans his soul away.

And other pictures, on that fatal plain,
Stern truth might draw, to harrow heart and brain ;
Here brothers clinging in death's last embrace,
There lovers dreaming of one absent face,
Kissing love's farewell token o'er and o'er,
Till lip could feel, and eye perceive no more.
Sad passed the day, but Night with tenfold gloom
Stole on the scene, and made that plain a tomb ;
Night, elsewhere lovely, here resigned her charms,
Pain moaned to heaven, Hope died in Horror's arms.
The' exhausted army on a tentless field,
No couch for slumber drifted snow-banks yield ;
Gathering in groups, they close round tiny fires,
Till, fuel spent, the friendly flame expires.
By hunger madden'd, oft the death-doomed men
Gaze at each other, turn, and gaze again,

As if they long, while shiverings on them fall,
To outrage Nature, act the cannibal !

Calm shines the white beam on the whiter plain,
Gusts heave the flakes, like billows on the main ;
Dread Tartarus was flame, but here behold
A hell as dire in numbing, torturing cold.
A drear tomb-silence hushes all things round,
Save when their whoops the savage Cossacks sound,
Or the wolf's bay comes hollow down the gale ;
O Moon ! that look'st on earth, so still and pale,
Gilding the icicles on rock and tree,
Dost thou, in pity, human suffering see ?—
Low droop those heads, but not with grateful sleep ;
Closer for warmth the shivering victims creep ;
Night's hours drag through, yet dawns for them no day,
Light in the heavens, but darkness on their clay :
The circle still is seen—it moves not now—
Death's pallor on each downbent, marble brow ;
There must they lie, unwept by friend or foe,
Wrapp'd in their dreary winding-sheets of snow.

And this, O glorious, soul-enchaining War !
This is thy triumph—rise, and horse thy car !
Wear in gay pomp, for this, the plume and bays,
Tell men, for this, to thunder forth thy praise !—

Pleasures of warfare ? mercy ! love ! depart !
And every generous trait ! forsake the heart !
Then joy may warm the grasping, selfish soul ;
Then the sword's flash, the drum's awakening roll,
May fire Ambition with delirious dream,
Till dim, by war's wild splendours, all things seem.
Yet they who combat, hearths and homes to save,
Nobly devoted, and sublimely brave,
Are great as justly happy ; such have trod,
Battling for freedom, Græcia's memoried sod ;
Such have earth's plaudits won, from him who fell *
In Cæta's pass, to Nelson and to Tell.

But say, have conquerors raised, or humbled
man ?

Are their proud deeds a glory, or a ban ?
Sesostris, issuing from Nile's palmy vale,
Might crush the Arabian, bid the Indian quail ;
Philip's proud son might sweep on victory's wings,
And plant his iron foot on necks of kings ;
Cæsar a prostrate world convulse with fear,
His ghastly tower of dead a Timur rear ;
And Sweden's royal madman feel delight,
Beyond all other joys, in stirring fight ;

* Leonidas.

But what, when passed their troubled life, remains ?
They made no people blest, they broke no chains ;
When earth has hid the blood, and drunk the
tears,

History may gild their names a few brief years ;
Yet pride no strong, enduring light shall cast,
Their glory-towers in dust will fall at last :
Truth chasing error with her sun-bright eye,
The conqueror's fame, like morning-mist, shall fly,
Ambition's giant, from his mountain hurled,
Shrunk to a pigmy in the' enlightened world.

Successful Statesmen ! see what honours crowd
Their brilliant path ! how full, and clear, and loud,
Fame blows her silver clarion through the land,
Wealth flinging, too, her pearls with lavish hand.
Men deem them oracles, broad shields of power,
And praises, blessings, on their favourites shower,
Drink their rich eloquence, their wit admire,
Those hearts all love for country, souls all fire.
Sure life for them a dazzling dream must be,
Courtied by kings, while flatterers bend the knee.
The world believes renown and honour shed
Joy's ceaseless summer on each halo'd head,

That when they smile the' expanded heart is gay,
And all the loftier pleasures grace their way.

Yes, on the Statesman anxious pleasures wait :
E'en linked with bliss the struggle to be great
In paths where generous mind, through noble toil,
May fruitful make life's hard and barren soil.
Proud is the trust the stately bark to guide—
A nation's destinies o'er fortune's tide ;
And well the heart may throb that trying hour,
When threatening rocks oppose, and tempests lower ;
And warm with joy as storms subside to calm,
And o'er the surge breathes safety's living balm.

But statesmen, great or virtuous, never found
True lasting pleasure on fame's treach'rous ground ;
The popular, changeful breath, the worm that lies
Deep in hope's flower, till all its beauty dies ;
The day of tumult, night of racking care,
The feverish bed, sleep oft an exile there ;
The party-strifes, mind-wounds that ne'er will close,
The asps of malice, and the rage of foes—
These must they bear—the burden weighing down
The heart to dust—the scourge of such renown ;
Till oft 'mid seeming joy, and power, and pride,
They fain their heads in lowliest hut would hide,

Sigh to cast off their envied, golden chain,
And roam unthinking peasants of the plain.

In England's senate charmed was every ear ;
Loud rang the' applause, to young Ambition dear ;
Speeding their startling way, those bold-winged words
Around the Isle would fly — would pierce like
swords.

There stood the Statesman, crowned, at glory's goal,
Proud, great emotions thrilling all his soul.
Alas ! exulting heart ! fire-flashing eye !
The glow of lip-won triumph soon must die.
What sad and jaded man, in yon still room,
Bends by his lamp, as Night's thick-mantling gloom
Yields slow to doubtful Morn ? he cannot rest,
A nation's cares lie crushing on his breast :
He thinks of home-bred traitors, foreign foes,
Of moral earthquakes, and impending woes,
And in that solitude, a mocking dream
Applause of crowds, and worldly honours seem.
With pressing hands he tries to soothe in vain
His aching temples, and his burning brain.
O for oblivion e'en one passing hour !
Opiates may yield a sense-o'erwhelming power,
And wine will dash proud reason from her seat ;
Come, then, intoxication's maddening heat !

Shaker of senates ! envied by the host
Of fame's wild zealots ; England's stay and boast !
Thy triumphs, and thy dazzling pleasures, now
Are shorn of light ; a darkness clouds thy brow !
He whose great name a world could laud or fear,
Waking but censure, claiming pity's tear.

O Wolsey ! Cromwell ! ye who dared to climb
Power's mountain-tops, by flattery, art, and crime !
Ye thought joy's sun without a cloud would beam,
When realised each grand, aspiring dream ;
That, gazing down from honour's skyey height,
Elated soul would burn with full delight.
What didst thou reap, proud Wolsey ? Fortune's
field

The tares of anguish was but doomed to yield.
Where fled the joys hope promised to bestow,
When, Cromwell ! thou didst lay thy sovereign low ?
Stretch the strong rod of power o'er land and sea,
And England hugged hypocrisy and thee ?
Remorse, dire Nemesis, frowned ever near ;
Thy rebel blood was frozen up with fear ;
The poisoned bowl still seemed to threat by day,
And masked assassins dog thy cautious way :
The murderer of a king, in dreams of gloom,
Would start to see his victim quit the tomb,

Those royal grief-white locks all wet with gore,
While every wind his sighs of sorrow bore :
Then, Cromwell ! wouldst thou quake, and groan in
sleep—

For ah ! thine iron eye could never weep—
Spring from thy couch, and pace with frenzied tread
The lonely room, yet haunted by the dead.
To live was fame, and torture—but to die—
Oh ! couldst thou meet thy God's avenging eye ?
No subtlety, no fraud, would serve thee then ;
The mask would screen not, as it veiled from men.
Pleasures of power so won ?—the weeping slave
Bowed o'er his chain—the hermit in his cave,
Starving in penance, loathsome to all eyes,
Might turn from thee, and feel in paradise.

Yet Statesmen's hearts have glowed with bliss
supreme,
Their motives pure, their probity no dream.
Some have but lived to' advance their country's weal,
And like physicians, happy when they heal,
Burned with the rapture of achieving good,
And, while their land the shocks of fate withstood,
Have felt that peace wealth, flattery ne'er impart,
The cloudless sunshine of the' approving heart.

Since Aristides charmed an age gone by,
Chatham, Burke, Pitt, are names which cannot die :
Theirs was the love of country, theirs the soul,
Dangers ne'er daunt, base passions ne'er control.
"Oh ! save my land !" still gray-haired Chatham cried,
Thundered his last grand speech, and dropped and died.
Burke launched his fiery eloquence at men,
Who fain had made all earth a robber's den ;
While Pitt, unflinching, faced Gaul's vaunting lord,
Mind against strength, the tongue against the sword.

Hark ! far away that deep-toned, sullen knell,
Swinging, with many a pause, o'er mount and dell ;
Death's warning voice, a last adieu to time,
How sinks into the soul that solemn chime !
Up to the clouds the slow notes echoing peal,
Then through the valleys, mournful-wailing, steal ;
Moss'd streamlets seem to flow with sadder sound,
Young flowers to droop their heads in sorrow 'round,
As Nature knew that language on the air,
And, pitying, sympathised with man's despair.
Gone is the great of mind, the just of soul,
No more his thunder-eloquence to roll
O'er prostrate hearts, for mute that magic tongue,
On whose wise oracles rapt senates hung ;

Cold now that brow where Wisdom went to sit,
And dim the eye which flashed with generous wit ;
O Death ! to crush the glorious seems thy boast,
Snatching from earth all, all, earth values most.

See the long train, with hearse and sable plume !
Sight spirits love—to mortals full of gloom.
Last of the Senate-chiefs, now called to sleep
That slumber, not eternal, though so deep !
Where shall he lie ? in some proud cloistered pile ?
Or 'neath the grand cathedral's pillar'd aisle ?
No, the beloved of kings, above whose bier
Britain, as one sad mourner, drops a tear,
Asks not vain pomp to gild his couch of rest,
'Mid glowing marbles, urns with trophies drest ;
Seeks not to mix with honoured dust his clay,
Or join the grand and mighty passed away ;
But where the moss makes green the low-roof'd
walls,*
And birds sing soft, as eve's gray curtain falls,
And trees, like patriarchs, guard the humble dead,
And humble prayer by rudest lips is said,
The world-famed statesman, to poor earth consigned,
Will close his great career, and quiet find.

* Drayton Church.

There, for all time, shall Wisdom's children come,
And Oratory muse, her pale lip dumb ;
There Worth shall bend, and breathe the heart-felt sigh,
Religion mourn, while Hope will point on high,
And Virtue, with her handmaids, sorrowing kneel,
Bathing with tears the lowly grave of Peel.

While heroes scourge our race, and statesmen stand
Prepared to shield, or calm a troubled land,
The man of letters, in his pensive cell,
Slow builds his thought, and breathes his silent spell.
Scarce felt by headlong crowds his power may be,
And more to conquerors, rulers, bow the knee,
But genius hath a life beyond its own,
A glory-bridge across the present thrown,
A voice to sound through ages, charm or thrill,
Sway human hearts, instruct or ravish still :
Its fancies, stars, illumine the moral sky,
Its mind-creations ne'er, like mortals, die,
Ruling the spirit-world from throne sublime,
And giving others life, while conquering time.

Say, reft of letters—all the godlike sage
Hath poured from urns of wisdom on the page ;
All grave historians, searching far and wide,
Have chronicled to teach, amuse, and guide ;

All glowing bards have hewn from mines of thought,
The grand, the fair, from Nature's storehouse brought—
Oh ! reft of these, what darkness would enshroud
Our humbled race ! how black the hideous cloud !
Past deeds unknown, and crimes and virtues too,
Shivered the glass where man man's self might view,
Experience to our days no truths would yield,
No far-thrown hopes would gild the future field.
Mercy gave letters that man's dreams and fears,
His burning aspirations, smiles and tears,
Should not all perish when he sought the tomb,
But, deathless flowers, in after ages bloom.
The savage tribes, to art and learning blind,
Doomed to the starless midnight of the mind,
Grasp but the hour, in rude pursuits engage,
Scouring their wilds, unchanged, from age to age ;
But, blest by Heav'n, the sons of Europe gain
Wisdom from years, whose light ne'er shines in vain ;
And hiving all, increasing still their store,
Feeding on past sweet thoughts, and dreaming more,
Theirs is a wealth that hath no wings to fly,
A golden chord which binds them to the sky ;
For literature is soul, and all we see
In glorious mind descends, O God ! from thee.

In fervid youth, when owns the heart no rein,
Keenly alive to pleasure, and to pain,

When, like quick-bursting flowers in genial Spring,
Young hopes bloom forth, and sweet imagining,
Who hath not felt, 'mid dreams that wildly glow,
The heart's romance—ideal joy and woe?
How pleased, absorbed, o'er fiction's page we bend,
That ne'er in after life such charms can lend!—
Blest art that gives us, seated calm at home,
Safe from the burning blast, or ocean's foam,
Pictures of every land, and race, and clime!—
The' Ausonian valley, and the Alp sublime;
With Park to rove where palmy deserts sweep,
With Cook to sail the world-encircling deep;
With Burchardt muse o'er ruins lone and vast,
With Layard search tombed cities of the past.
It hangs in Mind's broad sky fair history's light—
A generous moon to chase oblivion's night;
Calls from the grave the great of olden times,
And bids us mark their virtues, shun their crimes:
It grants us, too, the proud ennobling joy
Of close commune with genius; years destroy
Cities, and rock-built pyramids, and shrines;
All, all that is material wastes, declines,
But deadly Time no blasting bolt hath wrought,
To crush that tower of mind—immortal thought!

Yes, with the world's foundation, still shall stand
The glorious lore of Homer's classic land;

While hearts may pulse to bliss, and ages roll,
Shakspeare and Milton shall be suns of soul ;
Pope with his polished numbers, bold and free,
Shall witch the ear—the lord of harmony ;
Young make men gravely wise, sweet Thomson
shed

The dews of Seasons on the grateful head ;
Chaste Cowper, Goldsmith, win by Nature's strain,
And Shelley roam vague mystery's dim domain ;
Laborious Southey urge his noble flight,
And genius mourn the broken lyre of White ;
The stern, the scorching soul of Byron fling
Gloomy enchantment on each earthly thing,
His numbers ravishing, while darkly sad,
As though a fiend in angel-robcs were clad ;
King of the realms of song, still gazing down,
With scorn-outflashing eye, and withering frown.
And he, warm child of fancy, swathed with flowers,
Fed by rich sentiment, in perfumed bowers,
Shall lap the soul in visions, the most sweet
That e'er thawed Stoic's ice at Passion's feet,
Chase from the heart each haunting form of
woe,

Spread Love's soft vermeil hue on all below,
And, rivalling happy Alchymists of old,
Transmute truth's iron into fancy's gold—

Hail thou, whose lips the honied bee crept o'er !
Hail nightingale of minstrels, matchless Moore !

Yet little weens the world, through each dull age
Drawing delight from bard, historian, sage,
How they, the priests of letters, toiled or sighed,
Passed life in sorrow, or neglected died.
The joy they gave, of misery oft was born,
As bursts from Night's black depths pearl-scattering
Morn.

The wear of intellect, its fevered powers
Goaded and strained, depression's heavy hours ;
The world's cold greeting, petty sneers of Pride,
Ease, peace of spirit wooed, but still denied ;
The irksome task with fashion's tide to cope,
Chill disappointment following burning hope—
These oft the gifted ones were doomed to bear,
Monarchs in mind, yet slaves in grief and care.
He whose great thoughts a kingdom's wealth surpass,
Graved on Time's page more durable than brass,
Ruling, when titles, power, no homage find,
Treasured by millions, heirlooms of mankind—
He, when in life, perchance no laurels won,
Marsh-fires more honoured than the glorious sun ;
Want's lean hand on him pressed through struggling years,
His days all bitterness, his nights all tears ;

And when, at last, poor Nature sank to sleep,
Above the' Immortal none were found to weep.

So Homer strove with poverty and ill,
And tuneful Plautus turned the weary mill :*
So Dante roamed an exile, wrapt in gloom,
Framer of song, whose paradisal bloom
Lives for eternity, enchants and glows,
While dull oblivion shrouds his tasteless foes.
Hapless Camoëns, now his country's pride,
Sang his land great, and in an alms-house died :
O saddest blot on glory's sullied page !
Contemned, forsaken, lay the bard and sage,
A large sun setting, not with golden blaze,
The mists of anguish hiding all its rays.—
From town to town roamed thoughtful, learned Stow,
Begged at each door, and eat his crust in woe,†
Snatched dying history from the grave of time,
Hard, crushing poverty his only crime.
Unhappy Collins! tender, chaste as sad,
Neglect first stung thy soul, then drove thee mad.

* Plautus, the famous Roman dramatist, was at one time so poor, that he entered the service of a baker, and worked at the hand-mill.

† Stow, the celebrated antiquary and faithful depicter of the manners and customs of his age, was permitted by his ungrateful countrymen, in his eightieth year, to beg his bread. He actually received a license, or pass, from James I. to collect alms, as a pauper, throughout the country.—See *Strype's Life of Stow*.

A thousand hearts beat quickly, brilliant eyes
Answering with tears poor Belvidera's sighs,
And plaudits shook the lamp-lit pile, while he,
Who charmed their souls, was steeped in misery :
Lone in a garret crouched the starving man,
O'er childhood's days lamenting memory ran ;
The haggard face, clenched hand, and desperate air,
Spoke of the piercing pangs 'twas his to bear ;
A world, by genius ravished, smiled or sighed,
While famished Otway bowed his head and died.*

A gentler vision, from the night of years,
Rises upon our dreams, and asks our tears ;
'Tis a young spirit—one whose name had slept
In cold oblivion's darkness, haply swept
Down, down, like million others, Lethe's stream,
To that Dead Sea, where no fresh memories gleam,
Save for his tragic end : sweet Pity, come !
Each bright-eyed Fairy, quit your leafy home !
Fancy ! bring flowers suffused with tearful dew—
Pale Genius ! twine a wreath—a wreath of yew !
Bend o'er the narrow spot no sun shines on,
The pauper grave of hapless Chatterton ! †

* The author of "Venice Preserved," according to the generally received account, died of absolute starvation.

† Chatterton, the precocious author of several poems, perished in his eighteenth year, and was interred in the burying-ground of Shoe-lane Workhouse.

There sank a mind too sensitive, too frail,
To meet keen scorn, and front life's stormy gale ;
Not his to brave mankind—a mountain oak ;
The valley's reed, he bent beneath the stroke.
Stern natures rise; the gentle downward hurled ;
Stern natures only triumph o'er the world.
We view him in yon room, the moon's pale ray
Softening that face, where never more shall play
The smile of gladness, cold and wan Despair
Tracing, with white thin finger, madness there.
Youth ! to what pitiless demon wert thou slave,
To ask, in life's warm flush, the icy grave ?
Wild passion for renown thy heart consumed ;
The promise-flower was blasted ere it bloomed ;
Then, as the poison-bowl brought dim eclipse,
Glazed thy bright eye, and paled thy youthful lips,
No sounds seraphic called thy soul away,
No bursting visions poured celestial day ;
No friend was near, a pitying watch to keep,
Whisper of fame, and soothe thy last sad sleep ;
Thy guardian angel fled, hope, love retired,
Alone, unmourned, thy spirit's lamp expired ;
The world went on, joy laughed, and flaunted pride,
And thou lay'st there—God help the suicide !*

* It was in a house in Brook Street, Holborn, that Chatterton, August, 1770, terminated his existence by poison.

Yet say not letters bring their votary woe,
That rarely genius finds joy's pearl below ;
If want and misery on the scholar press,
Share not unnumbered mortals like distress ?
Oh ! trials, sufferings, wait each pilgrim here,
Nor fall they on fame's children more severe ;
Their wreaths, though wrought of thorns, attract all eyes,
They make their sorrows heard, and voice their sighs ;
Millions, wrongs, ills, more sad than theirs, have known,
Unseen the tear, unheard the secret groan.
Ah ! rather say kind letters yield a spring
Of pure, bright bliss, and all that fate can bring
To whelm proud Genius, oft is dashed aside,
As from the bark's swift prow the foaming tide.
Lore, and immortal thoughts that light the page,
Have raised men nearer heav'n in every age,
Sweet mental day in darkest dungeon shed,
And rapture given, all other rapture fled.

A bliss yon poor and friendless student knows,
Rewarding toil, outweighing heaviest woes ;
He feels it, in evoking forms that rise
From time's deep gulf to charm our living eyes ;
He feels it, in the' ideal world of light
His art calls up, with scenes of beauty bright—
A fairy-land of beams, and flowers, and Spring,
Where harsh realities no Winter bring.

What though, with others, 'tis his doom to bear
Corporeal pain, and poverty, and care,
His loved pursuits can lighten suffering's load,
And make a palace of want's dark abode ;
Can, sweet Auroras of the soul, illume
Misery's long polar night of cold and gloom.
Speak not of woe—his visions marry joy ;
The feast where Spirit revels cannot cloy.
The' exciting hope his history, or his lay,
Will not, with him who framed it, pass away,
But leave upon the waste of years a mark,
A beacon-fire to guide across the dark—
That dream, so full of bliss, with burning spell
Shall fire his eye, his yearning bosom swell,
Raise him superior to each trial here,
Hush every sigh, chase every rebel tear,
And 'round him throw a dignity of soul,
Men's hearts his page, and endless time his goal.

What cheered a Raleigh in his cell of gloom,
Bade him forget his woes, and coming doom ?
What buoyed Cervantes' soul, and pleasure gave,
When scourged and chained, he toiled a captive slave ?*

* The immortal author of *Don Quixote*, in 1576, was captured by Algerine pirates, and for a considerable time retained in slavery at Algiers.

What calmed half frenzied Tasso, kindly drew
The sting from grief—a friend, all else untrue?
And oh! when darkness sealed a Milton's eye,
No more to gather bliss from earth and sky,
What lit the world of mind, and, with sweet power,
Exalted age and brightened every hour?
Letters! ye gave the joy—O art divine,
Embodying thought in words! the spell was thine.

END OF BOOK IV.

PLEASURE.



BOOK V.



THE CONTEMPLATION OF BEAUTY A SOURCE OF PLEASURE—LOVE.



WHEN the great Spirit said—"Thou dust! arise!
Tread the green earth! behold the doming skies!
Think, feel, hope, love—no more a senseless clod,
Lord of the world, and image of thy God!"
Then man's proud form was dower'd with faultless
 grace,
And perfect beauty lit sweet woman's face:
Both rivalled shining angels, taintless, bright,
Moving in purity's self-beaming light.
But crime and ruin came, and now below,
Through hideous passions, withering want and woe,

What dark abortions, loveless forms are seen!
Sunk the bold front, and lost the godlike mien.
Oh! where expanded brow, straight facial line,
Symmetric limb, and lineament divine,
In yon poor Afric slave with woolly hair,
Broad face, protruding lip, and mindless stare?
In yon lank savage of Australia's shore,
Whose sense above the brute's may scarcely soar?
In tribes that roam where Polar tempests blow,
Rough as their hills, and duller than their snow?—
Deformity walks wide this world of ours,
Her henbane woven close with beauty's flowers;
Yet oft, in casket rude, is virtue shrined,
The darkest ill deformity of mind.

Behold—despond not—stars still gem the skies,
Streams run pure crystal as in paradise,
And loveliness in many a country glows,
And, round fair woman still, enchantment throws:
It is her heritage—her gift—her right,
E'en as the trees are green, and suns are bright.

But what is beauty? wayward Taste, declare—
Dwells it in shapeful form, or feature fair?
Woman, in all that rigid Art may seek,
Shall match the grand ideal of the Greek—

Fine-pencilled brow, small head, and neck of grace,
Soft-dimpled cheek, straight-chiselled, oval face,
The ivory shoulder, and the rounded arm,
The figure lithely-slim and chastely warm—
These may she boast, true beauty still as far
Above her path, as beams from earth yon star.
A model-form of clay that wins the eye,
But moves no heart, and wakes no rapture-sigh ;
A cloudless Summer heaven—a fair-sloped hill,
Without a wood, a mead, or glancing rill ;
A tropic bird, to which bright hues belong,
But whose gay, golden bill doth pour no song ;
A flower where no perfume the fairies find—
Such, such is Beauty, uninstinct with mind !

By soul's strong magic, then, must woman win,
The spirit-light outflashing from within.
Expression is true beauty ; brow must speak
As well as lip, the thoughts' clear sunshine break
O'er features eloquent, to reach the heart,
As though each eye-beam were a word, a dart ;
Warm feeling, modesty, and truth, and grace,
Must prompt the gestures, and illumine the face ;
Surpassing brow, though dazzling, smooth, and fair,
And teeth of pearl, and coal-black wreathing hair,

Intelligence will rule, a glory sent,
Breathing like soul from each pure lineament,
Proving the' immortal, marking the divine,
The beauteous frame-work but a light-filled shrine,
Where outward beamings, mind's announcements, tell,
Palaced within, the guardian virtues dwell.
Such is the flower that angel-hands might cull,
God's loveliest work—the good, the beautiful !

Taste might, enraptured, charms like these behold—
Charms whose sweet witcheries ravish young and old ;
For simplest hearts, and proudest minds, confess
The' exalting spell of soul-bright loveliness—
A vestige Heaven in pity leaveth still
Of Eden's glory, in our world of ill,
Like the rich beam, when day's proud orb has set,
Lingering 'mid clouds—the steep's red coronet ;
And eloquent it tells of future time,
When, raised triumphant to a sphere sublime,
It ne'er again shall change, or know decay,
But, from its sky-forged armour, dash away
The shafts of ages, as Morn's songster flings,
Soaring to heaven, the dew from off its wings ;
And like that bird, high poised o'er vapours dun,
Drinking pure airs, and brightening in the sun,

Beauty, no longer wedded to the sod,
Shall grow more radiant, winning light from God.

In Eastern lands where mental culture sleeps,
And Civilization's stream polluted creeps,
And Indolence, with crown of poppy, reigns,
And tyrant sense holds prostrate mind in chains,
Man draws delight from beauty—but a joy,
As childhood feels with some gay, sparkling toy,
And tires as soon ; the soft, black eye, the smile,
The tones of music, captivate awhile ;
And jetty curls, and laughter's rosy mouth,
Make one rich charm the Peri of the South,
That scarce, in other worlds, he hopes more bliss
From houri-forms, than beauty yields in this.—
As toppers quaff their nectar, but, when o'er
The' exciting draught, grow duller than before ;
As the poor idiot, spying heaven's bright bow,
Would clasp the glory ere it drops below,
But, hurrying on, beholds it fade away,
And mopes more sullen for the vanished ray ;
So he, who deems love's lasting bliss to find
In sense alone, but grasps the formless wind,
Looks at the beautiful, and wonders why,
E'en as he gazes, its enchantments fly,

And turns half wrathful, that his gathered flower
Can yield no fragrance for a future hour ;
The novelty that pleased, no longer new,
The sun of passion drinks up all the dew ;
And the crushed leaves, though still the colours live,
Nor freshness now, nor sweets voluptuous give.
Blind Orient lord ! he makes, then scorns the slave—
A beauteous rainbow brightening o'er a grave ;
There soul lies sepulchred in cold decay,
While all the outward glory melts away.

To Europe ye must turn, where woman claims
A nobler birthright, fired with loftier aims ;
And loveliness, beyond the passing hour,
Holds o'er swayed hearts its golden wand of power.
But beauty varies in her shapes and hues ;
So Spring and Summer verdure, warmth, diffuse ;
Yet each delights perception, each can yield
Sweet flowers that grace its own peculiar field.
Blest law of heaven to suit the moods of all,
Or half mankind to one bright form would fall !

Lo ! on the banks of Rhône, where deep-blue skies,
Birds, flowers, and beams, make vernal paradise,
Yon Gallic maid, in coarse but gay attire,
Dower'd with her country's archness, life, and fire ;

A sweet brunette, she twines with busy hand
The trellis'd vine, or dances on the strand,
No moment still, all energy and heat,
Her tongue as active as her glancing feet :
Her hair, thrown back, a sunny brow displays,
Where never cloud of sorrow's winter strays ;
Joy sparkles, too, in eyes that rare weep tears,
Save those by laughter forced, whose pearly spheres
Shine, dew-like, on the roses of her cheek,
Where Love sits bower'd, though oft, in merry freak,
He leaps from dimples, and with arrows plies
The happy victims of her sloe-black eyes.
Her rounded neck, and slender wasp-like frame,
Match features, ever varying, like the flame
Which paints the sunset-cloud, the hues of fire
Still lovelier burning, as the last expire.
All gladsome things her radiant types may be—
Bright Summer-waves that chase bright waves in glee ;
Young birds, just waked, that dart from spray to spray,
Fresh blossoms dancing in the winds of May ;
Locks golden, shaking on the brow of Mirth,
Dews silvery, flung by fairies o'er the earth.
Oh ! she is all we image light-wing'd Joy,
Flying on sunbeams, song her sole employ.
Spirit that laughs through life, gay dreams her own,
Trials unheeded, discontent unknown,

From simple "being" gathering intense bliss,
Nor craving higher worlds, so pleased with this—
Such is Gaul's daughter—pity, blame, or praise—
A thing of smiles, a child of joy-bright days.

Another picture—see yon antique pile,
Up whose gray front young roses climb and smile,
Like infants, vermeil-cheeked, in age's arms,
Softening the dark and rugged with their charms.
In billowy waves of glossy, living green,
Far sweeping round, an English park is seen ;
There graceful trees, tall verdure-spires, upstart,
Or stand in groups, like friends who will not part ;
The bright-faced streamlet dances in the sun,
The flower-kissed waters singing as they run ;
The rustic bridge time swathes with mosses brown,
The cawing rooks from toppling nests look down ;
And oft on some green knoll, against the sky,
Still as carved there, his antler'd head raised high,
Pauses the stag, nor hears, amidst the calm,
The hunter's horn, but only drinks heaven's balm.
Hark ! from beyond the wood, where Summer plays,
And panting hides her from the solar blaze,
Those low, and musical, and plaintive bells,
Whose chime by fits through pulseless noontide swells ;

They seem a voice sent back from vanished years,
Piercing closed memory's cell, and prompting tears,
Then in blue distance floating, like a sigh
From Nature's heart, their tremulous echoes die.

She sat where eglantine and roses made,
Sweet, wedded flowers, a cool delicious shade,
Her sire's old mansion near, and that wide lawn,
Rich with moss'd stream, and tree, and gambolling fawn.
Oh! beautiful she looked, as languor now
Paled her soft cheek, and thought illumed her brow.
Hers was a face the limner, ravished, paints,
Proud as a Juno's, gentle as a saint's.
She realised each charm that Art hath thrown
On glowing canvas, or round breathing stone :
Apelles and Lysippus here might kneel,
Confess their works surpassed, and envy feel.
Behold that forehead where the shining locks
Part like two streams, to fall upon those rocks,
The glossy marble shoulders!—the straight line
Of oval features, deemed by Greeks divine ;
The short, sweet lip—the snow of virtue's breast,
The chin that Venus with her finger pressed,
And oh! that eye, whose lashes shade the beam,
Lest too much fire from each bright orb should gleam—

The dome of feeling, glittering window giv'n,
For soul to look abroad, on earth and heav'n.
Calm elegance, an air subdued, severe,
Breathe round that maid their golden atmosphere.
High thought has stamped its signet on her face,
Each gesture ease, each quiet motion grace :
Sweet gravity is hers, yet tempered zeal,
A soul to muse, to love, to deeply feel ;
And while the Gallic maid but smiles and sings,
Through loftier paths her glowing fancy wings,
Her beauty more exalted, more refined,
A mortal's body, with an angel's mind.

Such are the beings gracing life's dull road,
Now found in penury's cot, now wealth's abode ;
And such inspire that passion's tender dream,
Which sheds on hearts love's pure, yet burning beam.
What feeling strong as love—denounced or blest—
Has God's wise law implanted in the breast ?
What has so coloured, since Eve's first sweet wile,
When man forgot lost Eden in her smile,
The drama of existence ?—Life scarce owns
A melody, but takes from love its tones.
What draws such landscapes of prospective joy,
That harsh realities but rare destroy ?

What turns aside misfortune's venom'd shaft,
Extracts the gall from misery's bitter draught ?
Plants in the clouds of ill hope's cheering bow,
Melts, with warm breath, want's cold and numbing
snow,

And makes the cottage radiant, strewing flowers
Along the path of life's most dreary hours ?

What but that god whose glowing spell can give
Thoughts that enchant, and dreams that burn and live ?

{ What but that Love, who charms both sense and mind,
{ Who, mighty in his weakness, rules mankind ?

{ O youth and love ! let wisdom ne'er despise

{ Your fairy dreams, and rapture-breathing sighs ;

Ye form our golden age, as if earth's prime

Once more flashed back—a holy, blessed time.

Love to the young comes fresh as dew-lipped morn,

Though gray with years, for them that moment born,

The music, though a hundred ages made,

Sweet, dear, as that which ravished Eden's shade.

O youth and love ! an isle of verdure placed,

To cheer with flower and fount life's arid waste—

The bridge thrown o'er the stream of care and woe,

Which pours, unrecked, its sullen tide below—

The Jacob's ladder—a bright glory given,

Peopled with angels—joining earth to heaven :

Never, ah ! never, may such visions bless,
So flood the heart with full-waved happiness,
In after wintry years ; love's sun may burn,
But the Morn's dew and brightness ne'er return ;
As Truth prevails, so airy fancy flies,
As wisdom chills, romantic ardour dies.—
O youth and love ! to you our world appears
One palace of delight—no sighs, no tears,
The common earth a garden, and the air
With music steeped, though common sounds float there.
The vale for you seems spreading all its flowers,
For you the birds sing anthems in their bowers ;
Pleasure for you doth choicest garlands twine,
Hope's cup o'erbrims with rapture's rosy wine :
Drink and be happy, while such witcheries last,
Nor mourn when time's dark clouds the scene o'ercast ;
The rose-leaf e'en when perished yields perfume,
And memory of love's hours shall ever bloom,
Calling up joy, when other joys depart,
And breathing fragrance 'round the withered heart.

Yet say not man was born to love and sigh,
And gaze on beauty with a Petrarch's eye,
Feeling but bliss as some fair brow may beam,
His soul enslaved, his life a morbid dream.

No, let him love, but manliness and pride
Must banish feeble sloth, exalt and guide ;
Hard lessons wait him ; stern-browed duty calls ;
Man must not idly sit in love's sweet halls ;
But action's trumpet sounds—his task to tread
A mazy road, with rocks and brambles spread,
Strain up life's toilsome steep, yet halting now,
As trav'lers pause on some hill's beauteous brow,
To drink Eve's balmy airs, and charmed behold
The wood's live green, the river's wandering gold :
Yes, he may rest, and court bright skies above,
And cheer his weary march by smiles of love.

Not such on earth is woman's gentler part,
Her law the' affections, and her world the heart.
Unstirred by fierce ambition, passion, strife,
Flower-fringed and calm, should glide that stream—
her life ;
Where man reaps bliss, she may not gather joy,
But tenderer dreams her trusting heart employ.
As to the oak frail honeysuckles cling,
And grateful for support, their fragrance bring,
So must she lean on something, shedding 'round
Affection's bloom, and sweetening life's dark ground.
Born to be loved, and yield to love's soft thrall,
Fair gambler, on one cast she stakes her all,

Wins happiness, or turns the dice of woe,
Most blest, or sad, of living things below.
Love is to her no pastime, given to cheer,
Or wile an hour 'mid toil and darkness here ;
'Tis in warm youth her dream, the luring goal
She strains to reach—the wealth of her fond soul ;
And if, sweet miser ! those prized riches flee,
No bankrupt spirit-crushed, or poor as she.—
An unstrung harp, where music's essence dies,
A tearful rainbow broken in the skies ;
A sun-loved landscape left to night and gloom,
A lily withering on Spring's closing tomb ;
O'er grief's dark flood a vainly wandering dove—
Such, such is woman's heart, bereft of love.

There is a joy in love's first dawn, as faint
And doubtful yet, its passion-colours paint
The horizon of our being ; hues unfold
Gradual o'er all the East, in rosy gold ;
So feeling, opening after feeling, slow
Warms into rapture's still increasing glow :
Love brightens as it deepens ; o'er the mind
Steal restless thoughts, and dreamings undefined,
While palpitating fears hold tender reign,
And hopes the sweetest blend with pleasing pain.

The soul, by fancy warmed, sees all divine,
All great perfections in one object shine,
And dwells on worshipped charms—hers, hers alone,
Till the beloved seems half a goddess grown,
Or halo'd with sweet glory, as on high
Shines Eve's young star, sole reigning in the sky.
Love deems life's stirring scenes but cold and tame,
And feeds in solitude its nascent flame ;
There, by some law to happy fancy given,
All things look richly drest in tints of heaven ;
The vales expand more gorgeous than of yore,
The woods wave greener than they waved before ;
More sweetly breathes the floweret, teared with dew,
The cloudless sky roofs earth with tenderer blue,
While softer harmonies, on every breeze,
Float down the hills, and harp among the trees.
It seems as Nature aided to enslave
The failing soul, and all her sorceries gave,
With love's first shafts, to lay cold reason low,
And bid fond passion rule, and rapture glow.

They sat together : 'twas a bank which May
Had pranked with flowers, where elves, at close of day,
Might dance on pansy-leaves, or climb to dwell
Within their marble tower—the lily's bell,

Or hold high court in that gay-painted hall,
The green-stemmed kingcup's yellow-shining ball.
The beam-waves broke on sunset's golden shore,
And spray, flashed far around, came mellowing o'er
The ether's level, dropping, like rich dross,
On the soft couch they pressed—the couch of moss.
The lark had caught Eve's splendour on his wing,
And seemed to lend the cloud a warbling string ;
The burnished wood lay hushed upon the hill,
Each branch low drooping, and each green depth still ;
The brook trailed lucid amber at their feet,
An eloquent verse on Time, it ran so fleet ;
And, tipped with fire, the church-tower sprang in air,
Looking to heaven, like holy Hope at prayer.
Love voiced each sound, and melted in each ray,
And Nature, for deep joy, half breathless lay ;
Thought stood, with finger on her brow, apart,
And quiet breathed its sabbath o'er the heart.
Such hours are lulls in stormy being here,
When Rapture dries her sister Sorrow's tear,
And something charms us, more than fleeting dreams,
And angels glide, and heaven around us seems.

They sat together : envious Time had brought
No shade to dim hope's star, and earth was fraught

With glory for their spirits ; love might fill
Each breast with fears, but kept his secret still.
The deepest love lies hushed, and hides its strength,
But pent-up flame, long smouldering, bursts at length.
Quick beat her heart beneath the snow-white vest—
Poor heart long tossed by passion's wild unrest—
And the dark lashes veiled—as clouds the skies—
The tender sapphire of her love-soft eyes ;
On earth, not him, her timid glance was bent,
And now a tear would start, a sigh find vent,
And all love's nameless tremors on her steal,
Feeling the most when striving not to feel.
Timidity that, fawn-like, shrinks aside,
Instinctive bashfulness, and virgin pride,
Were met by yearnings to the loved one near,
When shunned in seeming, then most prized and dear ;
For as each planet owns the viewless force
Of heaven's bright king, and may not change its course,
Her heart, a little world, by magic bound,
The sun of love obedient moved around.

His words were spoken, and her soul replied
In language to the faltering lip denied—
Blush, smile—the hand, when taken, not withdrawn,
Eyes' radiance flashing forth, like morn's full dawn,

Then dimm'd by tears which had no source in grief ;
Great rapture, like great woe, thus finds relief.
Now as her tresses, veil-like, downward spread,
Low pillowing on his arm, she laid her head :
Fond trustfulness ! to him in weal or woe,
She pledged her faith, consigned her hopes below,
Happy to frame his happiness, and draw
Her joy from him—her love, her lord, her law.
And thus they leant ; a soft, mysterious tie
Bound heart to heart ; the winds, faint chiming by,
Seemed whispering blessings on their future hour ;
Fancy heard nuptial music from each bower ;
The rounded moon, slow climbing o'er the wood,
Spreading, rich wave on wave, her mellow flood,
Beamed an approving smile, her prophet-rays
Telling tranquillity should gild their days.
Their late full hearts grew calm, but not the less
Steeped in sweet dreams, and gushing happiness.
All pleasures of the past seemed dim and cold,
To pleasure thralling now, and hope with gold
Paved the bright future road, while youth's fond eye
Saw nought but azure in life's smiling sky.

{ Yet harsh philosophy, and frigid pride,
Would turn to ice affection's summer tide,

Deeming it wisdom's part to soar above,
And sternly conquer, not submit to love. }
Know, iron Stoic ! One more wise than thou,
Has given a law, and bids all creatures bow,
That while our highest pleasures trace their source
To feeling's fount, and passion's tender force,
These shall sway earth's wide race and all sustain,
Age after age, the links of Being's chain,
And make harmonious, sharing Heaven's own fire,
The mighty music of Creation's lyre.—
There are, who deem Religion's triumph lies
In crushing instincts, severing heart-knit ties,
Bidding a long adieu to hopes that warm,
Joys that elate, and sympathies that charm :
Misguided souls ! say, wherefore do we find
Those feelings, yearnings, dower'd on all mankind ?
Shall Nature err, and ye alone be right ?
Yours to mould man, instruct the Infinite ?
God's essence is not gloom, but love and joy ;
Would ye his brightest attributes destroy,
And place Him in far space, cold, stern, and lone,
Crowned on his loveless, solitary throne,
Eternity's destruction-dealing king,
Gazing in wrath on each frail, human thing,
Pleased that the beings He hath made should sigh,
Or, looking up, raise only terror's eye ;

And while all Nature—hill, vale, sun, rejoice,
And beast and bird pour forth one happy voice,
Should worship in affliction and dismay,
And wear in tears their martyr-lives away ?

In yon dim cell the pale-cheeked Vestal kneels,
And there, as taught, a sad devotion feels,
Hopes to propitiate heaven, and favour gain,
By shunning worldly joy, and courting pain,
Sees each dear dream, that once gave bliss, depart,
And blots each tender memory from her heart.
Love is ne'er named, or named as some great sin
Hated, abjured, by those who heaven would win !
That passion, meant to draw the sting from woe,
And glad, broad sunshine on life's winter throw,
If chance, to taste its sweets, a wish arise,
What threatening terrors meet her shrinking eyes !
How must she mourn, and strive, and mutter prayer !
What penance do, what keen reproaches bear !
What tears of sad repentance daily shed,
Grief haunting still her lone and tomb-like bed !

'Tis but in sleep, when priests no more control
The free-winged thoughts, or crush the buoyant soul,
That instinct warms, and feeling dares to live,
And the heart claims all nature meant to give :

Then will the Nun, forgetting vow and cell,
The cold stone saint, the hollow, ghostly bell,
The melancholy chant, the tapered rite,
The dreary day, and oh ! more dreary night—
Then will she fly to haunts, beloved of yore,
The rivered vale, green wood, or breezy shore,
Drink draughts of joy, while sun-eyed fancy strays,
And memory wakes the music of gone days ;
Friendship's bright smiles again her path illumine,
Skies look all glory, and wide earth all bloom ;
And as the youth, once favoured, seeks her feet,
Her fluttering heart again with love may beat ;
Nor does she feel the rapture-thoughts that glow,
The smile, embrace, deserve eternal woe ;
That trembling, clinging to her lover's side,
In gushing fondness truth no more may hide,
Is crime in God's pure eye, for God hath poured
Affection's stream, is love's eternal lord.

Poor wandering heart ! morn's cold unwelcome beam
Steals in her cell, and breaks her happy dream.
See, on her hand, she stoops her brow of white,
Her fairy-world all banished by the light !
Youth, love, must bless no more, but funeral gloom
Shroud feeling, and dead pleasure, in a tomb,

Prayer wear those knees, sad penance force the groan,
And melancholy turn her heart to stone,
Her road to heaven all paved with pains and fears,
No hope but death, her only solace tears.

Yet think not love's strong charm brings bliss to all,
His nectar-cup, at times, o'erflows with gall ;
Through rapture's woof, oft runs a thread of woe,
A fatal plague the sweet South-winds may blow.
What secret anguish, passing body's pain,
Wrings woman's heart that trusts, and loves in vain !
What change will shade her spirit ! all that late
Sparkled with life, dull, blank, and desolate :
Fields lose their emerald, skies their turquoise hue,
As if o'er Nature woe her mantle threw ;
For still we mould to feeling outward things ;
Grief first creates, and then to darkness clings.
The lonely walk, the wood's cathedral gloom,
The winds' low plaint, the billows' mournful boom,
The saddening sunset, and the closing year,
When Sorrow heaps with leaves dead Autumn's bier—
These but attract the' unloved, yet loving breast,
That sighs for inward peace, and finds no rest.

But deeper misery lawless love begets,
When virtue's sun in cloudy darkness sets,

The soul content a life's long joy to miss,
For momentary gleams of guilty bliss.
The fair mirage the wayworn traveller sees,
Of flower-draped banks, and waterfalls, and trees,
That glad, enchant, but, while he gazes, fade ;
The fatuus-fire that lures along the glade ;
The desperate revel men will hold, when Death
Walks with the Plague, and breathes his blasting breath ;
Are like thy transient joys, illicit love !
That bind to earth, ne'er waft a thought above ;
They lap the soul in paradisal bowers,
Intoxicating sense, a few mad hours,
Then turn to scorpions, in the heart's deep core
Fixing their stings, and torturing evermore.

She leant within a room, where luxury piled
Its choicest gifts, and all things lovely smiled :
Fancy, witched, dazzled by the scene, might call
The gorgeous place Aladdin's spell-built hall.
'Twas Summer noon ; through windows backward
thrown,
Balm-breezes crept, whose wings, tired, heavy grown,
With odours of a thousand flowers, hung there,
Dissolving sweetness on the cool'd, bland air ;
The butterfly, gay-coated fairy, flew
From garden plant to plant ; the brown bee blew

His eager horn, till lighting on the lip
Of some red rose, his ruby wine to sip,
He revelled, drank, and, thirsty bacchant, pressed
Still closer to the rose's musky breast;
Then, lost to view, his silence well might be
From happy dreams, or drunken ecstasy.
The plashing fountain, shooting diamonds high,
The panting breeze, like Nature's loving sigh,
Blue, sinuous rills, by pebbles vocal made,
The drowsy birds' low twitter from the shade,
Lulled sense, and melted spirit at that hour,
Till e'en the witchery of Armida's bower
Seemed palpable and real; gazing round,
Ye half deemed Circe from some nook would bound,
With foot of snow, and tossing rose-linked chains,
Offering to lead through Pleasure's bright domains.

How beautiful that form of youth and grace!
Not made for woe the spirit-beaming face;
Lips of the soul, the large eyes seemed to speak,
As varying thought now lit, now paled her cheek.
Not hers a nature firm-opposing will,
Frail as the lily trembling in the rill;
Passion's ruled child, too trustful and too fond,
She sought but present bliss, nor looked beyond;

Thus had she listened in life's lowly vale
To vows untrue, believing falsehood's tale,
Loved, as young hearts oft love, too blind and well,
Forgetting all things, save that maddening spell,
Bartering earth's peace, and heaven's eternal joy,
For one wild dream, an hour might all destroy.
Yet happy, reckless now, the slave of sense,
She viewed yon scene, the room's magnificence,
Her robes and jewels—ah ! how poor, how dim,
Her once coarse garb, when climbing with young limb
The broomy hill, or gathering summer's rose,
Or breasting ruffling winds and numbing snows !
Happy ? shall pleasure, then, be grasped by crime ?
Yes, as the maid culls flowers in Indian clime,
But shrieks to fold the asp's quick, deadly sting ;
Yes, as fierce beauty rides the lightning's wing,
That gilds the sky, and makes sublime the heath,
And yields a glory, while it dooms to death.

She rose, and, bending forward, listened now,
A shade of thought and sorrow on her brow :
Borne from afar, in liquid falls and swells,
She caught the wave-like notes of village bells.
How slight the thing—a scene, a sound, perchance,
A name, a flower, will chase lulled Memory's trance,

Waft back the soul across the bridge of years,
And melt hard feeling's ice to warmest tears !
Those peals that down the glen, with verdure clad,
Pulsed wildly musical, and sweetly sad,
Sank in her heart, but brought no soothing balm,
They seemed a spirit talking through the calm,
Whose every word had talismanic power
To pierce time's tomb, and raise the past dead hour,
And image to her eyes scenes far away,
And those she wronged, yet loved in earlier day.
Before her spread a landscape, green and still,
A reed-roofed cot white-glancing near a hill,
With loving woodbine blushing round the door,
And low-hedged garden, with its bloomy store.
A stream, as loth to leave, meandered slow,
Then foamed and rushed, to turn a mill below.
The emerald meadow thickly pearled with sheep,
The lazy team, the plough's long circling sweep ;
The elms, where rooks built high their noisy town,
Crag, from whose summits bearded goats looked down ;
All formed a picture of Arcadian prime,
Vivid to mem'ry, linked with happier time ;
Empires might fall, or dynasties might cease,
Their thunders would not reach that vale of peace.

'Twas there in girlhood's fresh pure morn she dwelt
Ere her stained soul its fatal passion felt ;

There innocence close nestling like a dove,
She looked to Heaven, while Heaven looked down in
love.

Dear haunts ! how precious still their tranquil shade !
The hawthorn'd walks where guileless childhood played,
The smooth, trim green before the hamlet spread,
Where oft on festive days the dance she led,
And gay companions joined in laughter sweet,
Each heart as light as lightly-tripping feet.—
What draws her mental eye ?—the place of graves,
Where many a yew, sigh-breathing mourner, waves,
And the moss'd tower guards well the dreamless rest
Of those whose pillow is earth's flowery breast.
An aged man bends there, dejected, lone ;
A new-turfed mound heaves fresh beneath the stone ;
And as he bends, his snow-white, scanty hairs
Half veil the name the rude memorial bears ;
And as he bends, tear, following tear, falls slow,
Wrung from a heart surcharged with wordless woe.

Maid of the gorgeous robes, and palace bright !
Who thought display and wealth would bring delight,
How crime's gay dreams before that picture flee,
Pleasure's false gold turned iron agony !
O peace and innocence ! that never more
Will cradle life—O days of rapture o'er !

Her love was madness reason could not quell,
His vows were fiendly falsehoods breathed from hell.
Remorse is vain—repentance comes too late—
Old friends now foes, her sweet home desolate ;
Her mother's grave—her father's streaming eyes—
More near, more truthful still, the scenes arise :
Her trembling hands she presses o'er her face,
As if the vision from her brain to chase,
And fast and thick, as memories on her rush,
Through her white fingers sparkling tear-drops gush.
Sobs, deep and loud, convulse her hopeless breast,
Where virtue dwells no more—a hallowed guest ;
Oh ! for her sinless childhood !—Would she lay
Beside her mother's cold and dreamless clay !
Being is now a burden dread to bear,
To leap time's bank her soul would almost dare,
Cast suicidal darkness on her name,
For death alone can hide her sin and shame.

Turn from the picture shadowed by distress,
To scene more bright in life's wide wilderness ;
On love's vexed wave no compass and no chart,
When long hath tossed the vessel of the heart ;
By hope's fair gale now swiftly onward borne,
Now locked within the ice of fancied scorn ;

While Doubt's black clouds oft pall the threatening sky,
And flash thy lightnings, withering Jealousy!
How blest, each trial o'er, each peril past,
To reach calm Hymen's golden shores at last!

Here Pleasure crowns man's lot, and chases woe,
If ever Pleasure's angel lights below.
Stern cynics paint the ills of Hymen's bower,
How serpent discord lurks beneath each flower,
While cares, bleak pitiless winds, arise each day,
And blight the buds, and steal the sweets away:
Let such in cold antipathy remain,
And drag through life their solitary chain;
For them no sympathetic fervour glows,
From mingling hearts no finer rapture flows;
Content to gaze, to hope, to feel—alone,
No fond loved spirit whispering to their own;
No genial dews of social joy to bless
Their stony pride, and frigid dreariness,
Self, only Self, love's funeral bell to toll
Across the wintry desert of the soul.

The wedded, bee-like, can extract joy's sweet
From all that blooms; the city, lone retreat,
Tumult and quiet to their hearts the same,
Nor place, nor time, affects their hallowed flame.

But warm romance chief points to rural bowers,
Where Bliss and Hymen lead the halcyon hours :
Yet not in poverty's rude hut shall dwell
Peace, ease, delight, as fond enthusiasts tell ;
Nor in wealth's dazzling pile, where golden chains
Of fashion bind, and palling lux'ry reigns ;
From cankering care, from brilliant bondage free,
Those angels sojourn, Competence ! with thee.

How sweet the mansion on yon green hill's side,
O'erlooking vale, and forest's leafy pride !
Love's votaries there, when Morn on tip-toe stands,
And opes her pearly gates with rosy hands,
Shall gaze o'er Nature, fresh as jocund day,
And ravished watch the world-awakening ray,
Drink the rich breath of flowers, that send to heaven
Their fragrance-thanks, for dew and sunshine given,
And catch the song the blithe lark trills on high,
Up in his amber palace in the sky,
Still singing sweeter, as he soareth higher,
His sun-lit wing a speck of golden fire.
Joy walks the hill, Joy laughs along the dell ;
A hymn of praise from all things seems to swell ;
And their own spirits echo back the strain,
Blessing the great Creator's bounteous reign,

And tracing the full gushings of his love,
In all that breathes below, or shines above ;
Earth, heaven, commune with God, and they, too, dare
Look tow'rd his throne, and mount upon a prayer.

When noontide burns, and Nature gladly now,
From the bold-wooing sun, would veil her brow,
What pleasure down umbrageous walks to stray !
Pause by the freshening fountain's living spray !
Or pierce the wood, whose solemn Gothic shade
Breathes holy calm, for sainted musings made ;
Where small thin rifts of sky, like eyes, are seen,
And twinkling flowers star thick the sward of green.
How in the hushed, cool gloom—all earth elsewhere
Panting beneath the cloudless, withering glare,
The feeblest sound is heard !—a pendant leaf
Catching heaven's breath, with flutterings faint and
brief ;

The bee, flower-cradled, humming half asleep,
The rill's bright drops that soft through mosses weep ;
Yon grasshopper's low chirp, and, miles away,
The torrent's dash, the watch-dog's drowsy bay.
Nought feel they solitude, but 'round them call
Ideal shapes from Fancy's airy hall ;
See Oberon and Mab in sunset's beam,
With Spenser revel, and with Shakspeare dream,

Nor, while to visions yielding, love the less,
Romance and truth, both wells of happiness.

When Day is dead, and Night in tears of dew
Puts on her mourning weeds of sable hue,
Cheerful their joys, though Summer joys expire ;
They hold sweet commune, trim the social fire,
Hang rapt o'er fiction's visions, history's page,
Or music's charm shall each fond heart engage.
Then, if they crave high study, or sublime
Would send their thoughts beyond the world and time
'Tis but to gaze upon the wide, still night,
And read Heaven's book, whose words are orbs of
light—

A book deep humbling, yet exalting men,
Writ by Eternity with golden pen.
Yes, they shall muse on yon star-spangled sky,
Where fancy mounts to faint, and thought to die—
A shore where every pebble shines a world,
A sea whose foam is suns, where Power unfurled
His banner for unending years, and stands
Before the Infinite, with awe-clasped hands.
Nor need they shrink, o'erwhelmed by that survey,
Or mourn how brief their lives, how frail their clay ;
He who fills space, the Uncreate, Supreme,
Regards the glowworm, lights her tiny beam ;

The hand that guides the rushing, mighty sphere,
Supports yon flow'ret bowed by Morning's tear.
This shall they feel, and know the' Eternal's love,
Wide spread as worlds, smiles on them from above ;
Know that He values, guards the humblest soul ;
Suns may blaze on, and peopled planets roll,
They, 'midst the millions, shall not darkly sink,
Endless the chain, yet each frail heart a link ;
Heaven rules with equal love, and blessings fall
Alike for one immortal, as for all.

When nought of self dims love's pure-flowing stream
The wife sees mirrored there one rainbow-dream.
The loved one's grief, her grief—his bliss her own,
Their lives seem blent, like music's mingling tone.
In poverty his dreary hearth to cheer,
Breathe patience, hope, and wipe dejection's tear :
In wealth's gay blaze to temper and to guide,
Prompt generous deeds, and soften sterner pride :
In health to grace his home, and share his smile,
And when pale sickness comes, with gentlest wile
To cheat sad hours, a nursing angel stand,
Rendering all care can grant, all love demand—
This, this is joy, o'er which no shadows steal,
Joy virtue can but give, and woman feel.

But love, whose spells e'en warmer bliss impart,
Intwines the happy Mother's yearning heart.
Oh life-preserving passion ! instinct blest !
That sways, whate'er her lot, fond woman's breast !
Glow in the savage that by Niger strays,
Shielding her swart babe from the solar blaze,
Fills with affection's fire thy quickened soul,
Poor skin-wrapp'd wanderer, shivering at the pole !
Lives in all sentient forms, below, above,
The blood-stained tigress, as the meek-eyed dove.
Watched by a seraph, 'tis a grateful well,
Whose waters of pure bliss must ever swell,
Making most heavenly rich, most freshly green,
Millions of hearts that else had deserts been.
A Mother's rapture is a sky-blown flower
Cast down to earth from heaven's unfading bower,
Above the night-shade of her pains to bloom,
Turning care's path to beauty and perfume.

A joy it is, each day-dawn to behold
Her offspring's budding rose its leaves unfold,
To watch the strengthening limb, the clearing sense,
The eye's first sparklings of intelligence.
A joy it is, to see its joy made known
In dimpling smiles, that answer to her own ;

And e'en its tears a pleasing pain convey,
For oh ! 'tis joy to kiss those tears away.
In mirthful hour, when wantons on her knee
Her rosy imp, and shakes its curls in glee,
How the heart shares the sport ! maternal bliss
Voiced in her laugh, and gushing in her kiss.
When slumber's finger, 'mid Eve's shadows dim,
Seals its blue eye, and stills its ivory limb,
And angels, sent to guard the frail below,
Gliding to earth like mutely-falling snow,
Steep it in happy dreams, and smiling spread
Their meeting wings above its cradle-bed—
Then will she sit and watch, in hushed delight,
Beauties, like leaf-veiled fruits, half hid from sight ;
Mark, through the parted coral of the mouth,
The faint breath come, like fragrance from the South—
Features that change, dream-moved, as rills are seen,
Chequered by twinkling leaves and beams between—
Clasped lily-hands white Innocence might hold,
And, curling crisp, each tress of growing gold.

} The flow'ret loves the sun, and ever turns
Its joyous eye to where the glory burns ;
Stars love the crystal lake, and on its breast,
Serene and pure, their beams will nightly rest ;

The song-bird courts his mate at evening hour ;
The bee for love will swoon upon its flower ;
The pelican unseams her veins to give
Food to her young, and dies that they may live ;
Man loveth woman, oft with chastened fire,
Passion of soul that ne'er will change or tire ;
Seraphs in loving endless years employ,
And o'er the fair and glorious bend in joy—
But where on earth, oh ! where in realms above,
Is sight more beauteous than a mother's love ?

The heart e'en pleasure owns, first sorrows fled,
Dwelling on dear-loved forms—the treasured dead ;
For time will wear grief's keenest edge at last,
And softening haloes round the lost one cast.
See ! as the moon pours down her shimmering light,
Robing the moss'd church-tower in sickly white,
And gleaming on the graves, death's pride and boast,
Till each tall head-stone looks a sheeted ghost,
Pale by yon tomb the dark-veiled widow sits,
Mutters low words, and smiles and sobs by fits :
Now her dim eye is raised to that blue plain,
Where walks Night's queen, unheeding human pain,
Then downward cast, where tears the violet weeps
On earth's green heart, and all she worshipp'd sleeps—

All love once fed on—still love's ceaseless theme,
The one fixed star of Memory's nightly dream.
From grave to grave the low winds creep and sigh,
As if some restless shade went moaning by ;
And as clouds darkly pass the moon's wan face,
Like fiends who strive her beauty to embrace,
The shadow of their wings is cast below,
And deepens that still scene of solemn woe.

Yet here, e'en here, fond fancy will restore
Hours of delight, blest dreams, and smiles of yore.
Though love no more can pierce Death's voiceless cell,
'Tis sweet on all their joys, their love to dwell ;
Though sobs that breast, and tears, with every moan,
Drop one by one, large, sparkling, on the stone,
Sad pleasure struggles through her dire distress,
An iris brightening all her wretchedness :
And what transports, exalts her, till she deems
Her bliss reality, her woe but dreams ?
Thought of re-union in that far, bright sky,
Home of the soul, where Death himself shall die.

Hail, white-wing'd Love ! ye pure Affections ! hail !
Your fairy music heard o'er sorrow's wail ;
Not like hard selfish passions born on earth,
Close by the throne of God, ye sprang to birth,

And came below, joy's fire to guard and fan,
And raise your altar in the breast of man.
Powers, subtile and electric, reaching all
Created Being ! thrones may rise and fall,
And Gorgon War red-heap her hideous field,
And learning's light to Gothic darkness yield,
Still through the glowing, universal heart,
Your thrilling currents, swift, unfailing, dart.
Halejons, on life's vexed sea, proclaiming calm !
Airs, through the worn, hot spirit, breathing balm !
Impartial sweeteners of the cup of woe,
Drunk by the wise, the simple, high and low !—
Such are your spells, the golden dreams ye bring ;
Where'er ye burn, there Pleasure waves her wing ;
While hatred's blast sends anguish, strife, and death,
Peace, soul's perfume, is wafted in your breath ;
And while cold pride joy's sunny path shall miss,
Ye bear a torch, whose fire is heavenly bliss.

END OF BOOK V.

PLEASURE.



BOOK VI.

THE GAY WORLD—THE MAN OF PLEASURE—THE WOMAN
OF FASHION—THE LIBERTINE—THE DRUNKARD—
THE BETRAYER—THE GAMBLER.

BRIGHT rose-tints ever bathe youth's jocund Morn,
Then crowns of gold life's orient hills adorn;
Then feeling's dews lie thick on flower and grass,
And passion loads with sweets the gales that pass.
Gorgeous the landscape shines; no gloomy dream
Of coming storm, chill rain, or withering beam,
Casts a black shade on Joy's alluring fields,
E'en the grave past no warning lesson yields;
The present holds alone its tyrant reign,
And reason breathes its still small voice in vain.

Now sensuous Pleasure smiles her loveliest smile,
And youth nor sees her snare, nor heeds her guile,
But hugs her dear enchantments, and devours
The Dea-Sea fruits that gild her luscious bowers.

Oh! sweet abandonment to worshipped sense!
Farewell awhile the mind's omnipotence!
Come, Vanity! whose altar-fires so bright
Burn in young breasts, till Wisdom quench their light;
Hail the rich joys of fashion's dazzling room,
And chase those hermits—thought, and grief, and gloom!
Wake, viol, harp, and love's voluptuous lay!
Break Time's dull glass, and dance the hours away!
Let learning and improvement plod with age,
Leave Heaven's grand mysteries to the dreaming sage!
Passion her full bright river pours along,
List to no voice but Fancy's fairy song!
Bind Beauty's brow with garlands while ye may,
Soon night will come, soon winter's cold decay!
Snatch each rich gift exhaustless life bestows;
Heed not the violet, pluck the nectar'd rose!
And oh! indulge all, all your instincts crave,
No mirth will reach, no pleasures light the grave.

Blind creed! false reasoning! wearing garb of truth,
Too oft deceiving gay and headlong youth;

Soul hath not yet, expanding, gazed around,
To glittering phantoms, narrow visions bound;
Hath drunk not of experience' living stream,
Catching bright bubbles, melting as they gleam.
Enjoy the present, gloom and sorrow shun,
And pleasure's harvest reap, while laughs the sun;
But baseless bliss that vapour-like exhales,
Folly's gay insect chased through error's vales,
The nightly fever of the dancing throng,
Blaze of display, the banquet and the song—
To deem these life's chief good, time's solemn end,
Pant for them still, while sense a charm can lend,
And ne'er to soar beyond, but hold in scorn
The nobler joys, of thought and learning born—
O passing frenzy! dream more wild and vain,
Than dreams which steep the opium-feeder's brain!

Behold yon man, whose days have sparkled by,
Courtied by friends, no cloud in fortune's sky,
Who each flower'd path of sensuous pleasure trod,
Fashion his shrine, the two-faced world his god;
Whose laugh in mirth's bright chambers rang most
loud,
Whose form, among earth's children, towered most
proud;

No mask, no revel, but its soul was he,
His lip all wit, his heart all jollity.
Wealth, friendship, flattery, each conspired to bless ;
The air he drew seemed balmy happiness ;
A Petrarch's grace, a Crichton's brilliant soul,
Meeting in him, where'er life's waves might roll
He searched for pleasure's pearls, and, in his cup
Dissolving the rich treasures, drank them up.

But change hath come ; as sea-tides backward sweep,
Not long their height o'erflooding feelings keep.
Fashion's voluptuous Summer-reign is o'er,
What charmed and dazzled, thralls his soul no more ;
Prized novelty hath ceased its happy spell,
And dull Distaste rings slow dead Pleasure's knell.
Cold weariness succeeds to fever's dream,
And apathy's thick cloud veils passion's beam.
The man of smiles now frowns, but oft'ner sits
With down-bent eyes, in listless-musing fits.
Life hath its flavour lost ; the banquet sought
Too wildly, eagerly, a cloy hath brought :
And thus, with loathing sense, he turns away,
Old, though still young, for call not age the gray
Or snowy head, but heart all waste and bare,
Numbed by the torpid winter of despair ;

And oh ! that winter, which no suns control,
Sets in for him, and binds in ice his soul.

He flies to rural shades where none intrude,
But peace is torture to his gall-steeped mood ;
So gleams of heaven, caught furtive through the gloom,
Soothe not, but make more dread, the demon's doom.
Restless he roams far lands, another Cain,
Hoping to cast off memory's heavy chain,
And force, 'neath happier skies, and scenes more fair,
Feeling's decaying tree, fresh fruit to bear :
But Alpine grandeur, others thrill to trace,
And soft Ausonia's gorgeous, classic grace,
The wealth of Art, the majesty of Mind,
The pleading wrecks tombed genius leaves behind,
Awake no fire within the soul, that lies
Exhausted, dead, before the body dies.
The worn-out man of fashion languid views
Morn sow her pearls, Eve's pencil spread her hues ;
Moves languid through the dull and aimless day,
And wears in sleepless languor night away.
E'en Beauty's spell no more can light impart,
To chase the darkness deepening round his heart ;
From loveliest forms he turns with reckless eye,
Too sad to smile, and yet too cold to sigh.

Fancies and passions, once so active, sleep,
Stagnant as Sodom's lake, where winds may sweep,
But cannot stir the heavy, gloomy wave,
That death broods o'er—a silent, liquid grave.

Envy alone, fell envy gnaws his breast,
To see the stranger smile, and others blest :
He envies the lone scholar study's joy—
Pleasures of soul no sensual dreams destroy :
He envies the pale sage his raptured view
Of stellar glories islanding the blue :
He envies the rude peasant—once his scorn—
His glee at eve, his health-tinged cheek at morn,
His bounding, reckless heart, the sense that ne'er
Flags or is pall'd ; he envies e'en the tear
That generous Worth at sorrow's call can shed ;
Better e'en grief, than mourn all feeling dead.
Thus hoping, loving nothing, steeped in gloom,
Cold as mute sculpture on a moon-lit tomb,
His heart a desert where no dews descend,
Dreading to die, yet wishing life to end,
He drags existence, knows nor joy, nor pain,
And seeks excitement still, but seeks in vain.
The once trim bark of pleasure glides no more,
A broken wreck on life's bleak, wintry shore ;

The curse of weariness, Oh ! who may tell ?
Mind's cankering torment—weariness is hell !

So wandered one, a star most devious, wild,
Looming through storm-clouds, genius' favoured child ;
Who fled from self—whose spring was scarcely o'er,
Yet his heart's leaves drooped sear, to bloom no more.
Fame, others pant for, brought no joy to him,
Honour's sun blazed—his spirit still was dim.
He, grasping thought's fierce lightnings, like a Jove,
Trampling all creeds, all hopes that point above ;
Trampling his fellow man, as meaner clay,
Wide earth too narrow for his mental sway,
Seemed abject in himself—a being none,
While flattering, loved—whose daring thoughts would
run

Skyward up glory's mount, and then shrink back
In his own breast, all withered, scorched, and black.
Man's passions he held up to scorn and shame,
And yet himself, all passion, fed on flame,
Till his heart turned to ashes, one sole spark
Of early love to cheer the mournful dark.
What though bland Nature offered all her charms,
And wooed her favourite bard with outspread arms,
Vales, mountains, ocean, heaven's eternal fires,
Altars where burned his musings, other lyres

The small still breeze, but his the thunder's tone,
Unrivalled power and grandeur all its own—
No gladness thrilled his soul; the prized, the dear
Applause of crowds but torture to his ear.
Keenly he suffered, yet he dared his fate;
He asked no sympathy; his boast was hate;
Pleasure, once quaffed like wine, was poison now,
Satiety wrote anguish on his brow,
The wit, the genius, in sad exile sighed,
And, scorning his applauders, Byron died.

Man is the Winter, where cold, darkness, lie,
Woman the Spring of sweet philosophy :
Man is the ocean with wild, stormy roll,
Woman the calm, pure river of the soul.
Yet oft, like man, in youth's impulsive hour,
She bows obedient to the tempter's power.
She longs in Fashion's heaven a star to shine,
Draw hearts and eyes, and move a thing divine.
Pause, stern-soul'd moralist! nor all condemn
Beauty, who decks youth's brow with pleasure's gem,
Who, feelings fresh, one glory hope's broad sky,
Each path in brilliancé vista'd to her eye,
Joins pleased the glittering crowd, and swims along
The graceful dance, or pours her soul in song.

'Tis pleasure, blindly followed, bankrupts time,
Festers the heart, and maddens it to crime,
And while dethroning duty, leads away
The prostrate soul, a captive and a prey.
To sit long hours, deep study, thought bestowed
On decking this poor frame—mind's frail abode ;
Night after night to seek the close-thronged hall,
Display her charms, and glitter through the ball,
Drink flattery's incense, ply vain beauty's wiles,
Assume false airs, and art-coined, hollow smiles ;
While life but seems a gay voluptuous maze,
Nought worth existence save poor fashion's blaze—
Here weakness, folly reign—here guilt begins ;
And the fair vot'ress, while such bliss she wins,
Treads only the broad road to doom and ill—
Road misery's brambles, not joy's flow'rets, fill.

And now the draught, which held each sense in thrall,
Turns, drop by drop, to disappointment's gall ;
Envy, pride's wounds, and shattered health, destroy
The airy fabric of her baseless joy ;
Then, as time steals youth's magic from her cheek,
Comes the dread thought, proud beauty's wand must
break ;
Or, desperate grown, her charms and conquests o'er,
She robs from Art what Nature gives no more.

Fashion's frail victim, decked with flowers of Spring,
To Autumn fades—a seared and mournful thing.
None pity, love ; her days have fluttered by,
On gaudy wings through folly's summer sky.
Her mind hath garnered nought to yield delight,
Or star the gloom, as 'round her gathers night ;
Still wed to sense, and life's poor fleeting day,
She courts the world, and trifles age away,
Nor hears, while sounding, perished Pleasure's knell,
Nor hopeful dreams of heaven, nor dreads a hell.

But darker, more debased the spirit grows,
That hugs low vice, and deems all rapture flows
From red Intoxication's fiery draught,
Pointing to life's own source death's fatal shaft.
This guilt, this madness, not alone doth bind
Its spell on youth, or coarse, benighted mind ;
Grave years and towering intellects have bowed,
And veiled their light behind the ebon cloud.
Not clime, or culture, always shall unfold
Crime's poison-plant, and virtue's flowers of gold ;
But high example moulds a Nation's taste,
For men still copy men above them placed.
Thus Pericles on vice a lustre shed,
Nero Rome's sons in gross debauchery led,

And virtue's vestal-fire in Egypt died,
When wanton Cleopatra loved and sighed.

Is man immortal?—viewing thousands here,
Grasping frail pleasures—flowers upon a bier,
In sense alone their brute-like raptures sought,
Spoilers of time, and murderers of thought!
The beautiful, the grand, in earth and sky,
Mountains and seas, the peopled worlds on high,
Nought to their dullness, kindling no pure fire
In breasts that strive not, wish not to aspire—
We almost dare, might God's eternal plan
Permit the dream, so dark, so dread to man—
Dare shuddering to believe such souls will be
Barr'd from thine Eden, Immortality!
Denied the boon beyond this scene to live,
Looking to dust, and all poor dust can give,
Doomed, with earth's lowlier creatures, to descend
To night and silence, that shall know no end.

He lay upon his pillow, worn and pale,
And moaning sadly as a dying gale;
Around the sunken eyes dull lines were seen—
Eyes painful straining, ne'er to grow serene,
Ne'er shine again with hope—remorse, despair
Casting a night to bring no morning there.

The hand, thin, feeble, rested on the bed,
Each vein traced blue and large, while dewes were
spread,

Thick as they star morn's grass, on that wrung brow,
And Death those pale beads counted joyful now.

White as the pillow looked each haggard cheek,
Save in the centre burned a crimson streak ;

Like memory of some crime within the heart,

Whose fever-pang with life can only part.

Though young that face, it seemed as age had thrown
Its mantle o'er a form of fleshless bone.

O Virtue ! for crime's victim heave a sigh—

O Pity ! weep for fall'n humanity.

And this was he who, passion his sole guide,
Mind's dictates scorned, and plunged in riot's tide :

Woman, and wine, and laughter, chased along
The boisterous hour—his life one Bacchic song.

And this was he who hoped to grasp all bliss,
Snatching its flowers, though wreathing fate's abyss,

Living, as headlong youth would changeless be,
And revel last for all eternity,

Man born to feast, to each mad passion given,
No grave below, no awful Judge in heaven.

As comets baneful pass, and transient shine,
Flashed for an hour the wayward libertine ;

Now quenching fast his broad and evil light,
He sinks, unknown his doom, in fearful night,—
See, as he knits his brow, and rolls his eye,
Clutches at air, and gasps a broken sigh,
'Tis not remorse, repentance' strong control,
That shake, with moral storm, his shrinking soul,
But palsyng fear, whose arrows ne'er in vain
Were launched at crime, that pierces heart and brain.
He fain had hoped the tales of saint and sage
But idle dreams, that feeblest minds engage,
That no hereafter waits the soul, the grave
Rolling o'er all a black Lethean wave ;
But doubts, now rising, strive with stubborn will ;
Being may cross time's gulf, feel, tremble still,
See God's red lightnings flash, and on that shore
Bear unimagined woe for evermore.—
These dreadful thoughts, charged clouds, above him
break,
And turn more white his ashy, corpse-like cheek,
Prompt the deep groan, convulse the death-struck limb,
Dilate the eye, though growing glassed and dim,
And bid him feel hell's pangs and black despair,
Before his fluttering soul is wafted there.

How many a home in life's more lowly sphere,
That virtue might adorn, and love endear,

Is made, thou cup of frenzying fire, by thee
A den of crime, a hell of misery !
Strange rapture that exciting fever brings,
Strange rapture from the death of reason springs—
A bliss to drown reflection, and to feel
A cloud, a nightmare, on the spirit steal.

Enter yon room where vice doth woo the spell
Of Bacchic joys, but misery, squalor dwell.
The bare stone walls, the foul uncovered floor,
The paneless window, and the shattered door ;
The couch of straw, whence meagre faces peep
Of starving children, huddling as to sleep,
Then crying loud for food, their cries in vain,
For who shall feed them, who regard their pain ?
And one thin wretch, more white, more worn than they,
Propp'd by the wall, to slow disease a prey,
Whose feeble, shivering limbs have scarce a vest,
Rags hiding not the scarr'd and withered breast ;
Who groans at times, at times breathes curses low ;
Embodiment of want, and crime, and woe—
Such is the home—the hideous forms ye see—
Such miseries spring, O god of wine ! from thee.

He gazed around with dull and blood-shot eye,
Unmoved by hunger's call, by suffering's cry ;

The long-used cup, now flowing to the brim,
Held all the pleasure life could boast for him.
His grizzly beard, his rough and matted hair,
His garments tattered, and his feet half bare ;
The low black forehead that no mind expressed,
The bloated face down-drooping on the breast,
Gave to that sensualist the frightful look
The Ogre wore, when, mirrored in the brook,
Against his Maker with dire rage he burned,
And from his own foul shape in horror turned.

And death was in that chamber ; white, cold clay,
A tiny form within its coffin lay ;
The scanty curls just fringed the waxen brow,
Where misery traced no line of suffering now.
Blest babe, its happy spirit far removed
From darkness here, with guardian angels roved,
That scene of strife exchanged for peaceful bowers,
Where golden sunshine kissed unfading flowers,
Those haggard forms for glory's white-robed throng,
And curse and wail for sweet seraphic song,
The sinless soul borne far from crime and sighs,
Leaning in arms of love beyond the skies.

Nought recked the father the still coffin'd dead,
No softening tear imbruted nature shed ;

But fiendish laughter through the chamber rang,
And then a coarse dull tune the drunkard sang.
The mother from the straw her pale face raised,
And sadly wistful on her infant gazed ;
Sank near the wall again, and prayed for death,
Cursed life, and cursed the Heaven that gave her breath.
The murky day now closed, and stealing shade
The frightful spectacle more hideous made ;
Scarce might that pit a scene more fiendly show—
The pit where hopeless spirits wail in woe.

A different picture greets us, far away,
Where, hand in hand, the pure-soul'd Virtues stray,
And Temp'rance kisses rude Content, the Hours,
Children of Time, wide scattering virgin flowers.—
A close-set orchard thick with blossom-stars,
A dancing brook, its waves bright living spars ;
A cot that stands, like Modesty, aloof,
Thin household smoke, blue-curling o'er the roof ;
Yon swinging gate, and maid-perplexing stile,
Where oft the whispering lovers pause and smile,
Till grown more bold, and blushing in her charms,
She mounts, and laughs, and sinks into his arms.
The staff-propped patriarch haunting green retreats,
Smiling at years, and blessing all he meets ;

While Eve descends with broad, soft wing of peace,
Hushing the world, and bidding labour cease—
Eve shaking hands with Day, like friends who part,
And filling, with warm love, bland Nature's heart.

Now valeward winds the peasant to his cot,
And busy hands adorn the smiling spot;
Quick to his knees his waiting children bound,
And all things laugh a quiet welcome round;
He strokes their heads, and kisses each young elf,
And kisses her more prized, more dear than self:
The coarse meal health and labour render sweet,
The happy hours fly on with feathered feet;
The simple task, the rudely-pictured page,
The' amusive game, their artless minds engage;
And oft the Pastor, on his evening walk,
Turns him aside, with that small group to talk;
Praise and reproof, with gentlest smiles, are given,
And still, with radiant smiles, he speaks of Heaven.
Then, as far hills, night-mantled, look more brown,
And watching stars breathe holy quiet down,
Amid the hush, a murmur rises there—
'Tis the poor peasant's rude but fervid prayer;
Low on the ground the listening inmates kneel,
Nor more rapt saints in grand cathedrals feel;

The lively imp, wild, boisterous as a wave,
To hear God's hallowed name, grows meek and grave;
The tiny child, a bending cherub now,
Folds the small hand, and lifts the lily brow;
While to God's throne—all equal in His eyes—
The yearning Mother's thanks and pleadings rise:
Though hard the couch, sleep comes on downiest wing,
And happiest dreams their heaven-watched slumbers
bring.

Oh! where dwells bliss, if here no bliss there be?
Hail! Temperance! hail! that bliss all flows from thee.

Among the curses by Heaven's vengeance hurled
On crime's black front, in this our guilty world,
The heaviest, bitterest curse, the soul shall know,
That finds a joy in working woman woe,
Its proffered love a tainting, lawless fire,
Lit but for self, and burning to expire.

'Twas in a dream, when Night, with spell of gloom,
Gives wings to fancy, and unlocks the tomb,
Permitting shades to walk the star-lit dew,
And visit those in troubled life they knew,
His victims passed before his spirit's eye,
And wept and sighed, or seemed to weep and sigh.

He slumbered, sealed each sense, yet plainly there
Those forms assumed their living shape and air—
Tresses of glossy black, or floating gold,
And graceful robes around each phantom rolled.
She who first, gliding slow, that chamber sought,
Seemed wrapt in bitter and remorseful thought;
Her white hand pressed her bosom, and her pale,
Low-drooping brow told grief's unsleeping tale.
Her beauteous eye, as Eve's first star appears
Tremulous through falling dews, o'erbrimm'd with
tears;

That eye she fixed on him; its full beam stole
Deep, deep within, and touched his hardened soul.
He wrought deception; at the altar's side
He breathed his vow, and called her his sweet bride;
'Twas but a mocking snare; disgrace and shame
Made black the whiteness of her cherished fame.
Hot indignation rose, yet pleading love
Would brood above her anger, like a dove;
She spurned him, then forgave, and, 'midst her ill,
Upbraiding, weeping, loved, oh! loved him still.
She prayed, she clasped his knees in softening hour,
But he had plucked the fragile, gentle flower,
And flinging it to earth, as worthless now,
Moved coldly on, with reckless, boastful brow,

To cull more roses—women's hearts—till they
Faded in turn, and passed despised away.

A statelier form to pale distinctness grew,
And on the sleeper's soul a shadow threw;
Her head swayed back, as fate she would defy,
And wrath was burning in her vengeful eye.
What once was love had turned to fiery hate,
Her spirit lost, condemned, and desolate.
'Twas he who lured her virtuous steps aside;
His falsehood made the desperate suicide.
Yes, he had sunk her in the abyss below,
Whelmed her once happy soul in endless woe;
Bliss for an hour to him—to her must be
Remorse and wail, through dark eternity.

Another spirit sad, reluctant, came,
With timid, mournful air, and trembling frame,
Her light gold tresses falling, and her eyes
Drooping, and faded as dim twilight skies;
Yet in their azure depths, with sweetness fraught,
Dwelt love untold, a world of tender thought.
She looked as worn by sickness, thin and frail,
Like some poor flower cut down by Winter's gale.
Thus had she smiled in life, resigned and meek,
Consumption's finger on her hueless cheek,

Fading from earth—a slow but sure decay—
As tint by tint, at Even, dies away,
Returning, wavering, till goes out the light,
Leaving the landscape to the death of Night.

She paused in shadowy loveliness, and gazed
Where her destroyer lay, and feebly raised
Her wan clasped hands, as if in silent prayer,
Love's sweet light lacing thy deep gloom, despair!
Calm slept the base one who beguiled her youth;
Knowing no falsehood, she had deemed him truth,
And bartering for his smile a spotless name,
Loved him when undeceived, and loved in shame.
Demon of guilt, or angel form of light,
He swayed her spirit, as he charmed her sight.
Like thousands of her sex, she swept along,
Thrall'd, captive-led, by passion's Siren song,
He her one dream below, one hope above,
Her crime, blind worship—a too trustful love.

And when the faithless left the faithful heart,
Not loud was heard her wail; she launched no dart
Of keen reproaches at his fiendlike deed,
Herself would only sorrow, only bleed,
Hide in her bosom's loneliness the pang
That poison'd maiden peace—a serpent's fang,

And fold up, as a flower at shut of day,
The' insidious worm devouring life away.
A sweet star trembling on the horizon's brim,
Fainting in haze, and momentarily more dim—
We watch it sadly, yet may scarcely know,
When, in its pale decline, it drops below :
Thus did she pass from life, mute, placid, calm,
Death brought no terror, but kind peace and balm—
Glide to the grave, that refuge for despair,
Yet no one pitied, no one mourned her there.
Her heart was broken ; in that word of grief,
Centre all woes that ne'er may find relief ;
Her heart was broken ; what to her were pride,
Fame, hope, the world ?—she hid her tears, and died.

“ Sleep, dear one, sleep ! ” in accents low and mild,
Whispered the lovely shade, and sadly smiled :
“ Though Hades' clouds now gather round my soul,
Sweet thoughts of earth I may not all control.
My wrongs were great, but can I curse thee ? no !
Love checks my anger, and o'erpowers my woe.
When harsh upbraidings to my lips would rise,
Fond memories wake, complaints are lost in sighs.
Though causing anguish, may no grief be known
To thy dear heart—no grief that wrings my own !

I died through thee, for thee—but mayst thou live,
Blest with each good that pardoning Heaven can give!”

She glided from the room with noiseless tread,
Bowling upon her breast her beauteous head;
Her sobs were sad, as winds sad Evening hears,
And dropped large, brilliant, cold, her heart-wrung tears;
Those silvery tears, in falling, gemm'd the air—
Last proof of love, which only gushed in prayer:
The setting moon, with slanting, quivering ray,
Gleamed through her form, as slow she passed away.

But now that “man of pleasure” moved in sleep,
And o'er him fitful shudderings seemed to creep.
If but a dream, or if his victims spoke
E'en to his soul, he started, moaned, and woke.
Sure he had seen them—yes, their accents still
Floated around; he felt their presence thrill.
Why rose they from their tombs? why walked they here?
Half goaded by remorse, half pierced by fear,
His craven spirit shrank, while conscience clung
Coiled 'round his heart, and like an adder stung.
Was this thy pleasure, base betrayer! this?
Drawn from frail woman's sighs, thy boasted bliss?
Oh! torture now is thine, thou mayst not brave,
As great as sent thy victims to the grave;

And while the Eternal's eye looks down in ire,
Thy cheek is blanched, thy madden'd brain is fire.

A pleasure charms, though scarcely joy it seems,
Whose seed is sown by avarice, nursed by dreams;
The infant-buds shoot forth, alluring, fair,
But soon the deadly night-plant taints the air;
Like that dark Java tree of charnel breath,*
Whose bark drops poison, and whose boughs wave death.
Sweet are the gambler's visions, bright the ray
That lights to wealth, and bursts to golden day:
Let others slowly climb, and hardly toil,
In one blest hour he grasps the glorious spoil;
Though now he lose, his happier star shall win;
"Despond not! fear not!"— calls a voice within.
He strains with trembling hands, and eager eyes,
And seems to clutch, when furthest off the prize;
Till, lured beneath some tempting demon's thrall,
He dares his fate, and wildly stakes his all.

Now joys are joys no more; to fires they turn,
That piercing, maddening, to his heart's core burn;
His spirit on a rack is doomed to lie,
Torn by suspense, and frenzying agony.

* The Upas.

See ! how his starting eye-balls watch the dice,
His blood now rushing lava, and now ice :
Fate on the ivory hangs ; those numbers save
From ruin's gulf, or point him to his grave.
Scarce can his frame that dread excitement bear,
From hot damp brows he dashes back his hair,
Leans for support, his bloodless lips apart,
While, e'en to bursting, beats his tortured heart.
'Tis o'er—a muttered curse—an anguish-groan,
That lost and black despair can breathe alone—
And he, the ruined man, quenched hope's last ray,
As chased by fiends of darkness, speeds away.

The midnight bell struck deep, and sent around,
Like a vast throbbing pulse, its solemn sound :
Far through the moonless dark the echoes rolled,
Then melted into silence ; Time had tolled
Another life-hour to the tomb of years,
O'er which the present bent, and shed its tears ;
And this, too, with the coffin'd past would sleep,
Deathless Eternity but left to weep.
Dreams lapped the northern Babylon ; no more
Rose traffic's voice ; Thames rested on his shore—
Rested in slumber's arms, and pale, and still,
The stars, like net-work, gleamed through vapours chill.

Oh! on how vast a world of hopes, cares, woes,
Sank Lethe's charm, the' oblivion of repose!
As life an hour were quenched—all, all, but breath—
Gathering new vigour from that taste of death:
For sure in sleep the spirit wingeth near,
Though void of dread, the shadowy land of fear;
And dreams give glimpses, though made dark by sin,
Of Heaven's bright gates, and glories stored within.

Yet not to all was sleep's kind angel sent,
A pale worn form in lonely vigil bent;
Sorrow, an anxious heart that ne'er knew calm,
Chased from her youthful eyelids slumber's balm.
Moveless she sat, like Mary at the tomb
Of her dead Hebrew brother: night's thick gloom
Veiled all without, while melancholy rain
Pattered by fits against the beaded pane.
The breeze now sighed, now sighed her aching breast,
Harbouring but grief, the spirit of unrest;
And many a tear, from wells of secret woe,
Rolled down her cheek, and pearled her hand below.
Watching and listening, thus she wore the night,
Till, gray and cold, dawned Morn's uncheering light;
And oft she glanced, where calmly slumbered near,
In cradled bliss, unknown an anxious fear,

Her hope—her promise-star—her worshipped child,
O'er which, though *she* might weep, bright angels smiled.
And must the gambler's fiery passions sway
His spirit too, at some sad future day?
The thought, a poisoned dart, within her stirred;
Oh! no; her prayers, her sorrows, would be heard;
The soft-eyed cherubim would watch his youth,
And Mercy guide to virtue, peace, and truth.

The wife sprang up; all other dreams were cast
Quick from her soul—the loved one came at last.—
Hers was that nature which on love must live,
And, whatsoe'er its wrongs, must still forgive.
No just reproach she breathed, no anger gleamed
In those raised eyes, where trembling fondness beamed.
The weary watcher, stranger long to bliss,
Hailed him with smiles, and chid him with a kiss.
The strong-boughed tree oft bends to feeblest airs,
The constant water-drop hard granite wears;
So would she turn his soul from crime's black way,
Not by harsh words, but love's all-gentle sway.

The gamester met her trusting, warm caress,
With air of wildness, blent with keen distress.
Though Virtue's altar Vice had long o'erthrown,
It had not changed his erring heart to stone;

Deep in his soul, 'mid dunnest clouds of ill,
A struggling, fitful radiance lingered still;
Affection's light relieved the darkness there,
As in the North, when Winter palls the air,
The' Aurora cheers the long, long midnight's gloom,
Mounting like soul emerging from the tomb.
The ruined, desperate man would dare to die,
But might not burst for ever love's sweet tie,
Ere once more clasping that dear worshipped form,
So oft his halcyon calming passion's storm.
But now more stern emotions shook his frame,
His troubled eye shot forth a fiercer flame;
Strange soul-revealings from his features broke;
Lightnings that spare the flower, will rend the oak;
The wife, while gazing, felt instinctive fear,
Yet, spite of nature's shrinkings, clung more near,
Urged him to seek his couch, and slumber gain,
And rest his wearied limbs, and fevered brain.

“Sleep—sleep? there is but one repose for me—
The sleep that sets this soul from torture free—
Yet when I sleep, thy cares, thy griefs will cease,
And the poor heart, I break, will then have peace.”

Shstood, made dumb by fear; more sharp than swords,
Pierced those mysterious and self-threatening words.

She hung upon his neck—her piteous face
Upturned to his; her cheek that showed no trace
Of softening tears, for terror iced their flow—
Her brow where every line seemed writ by woe;
Her eye, the pleading, searching spirit's glass;
Her hair flung backward in disordered mass;
The trembling of the frail and beauteous frame—
All spoke the pangs of soul which have no name—
Pangs that not long can wring the anguished heart,
Madness must come, or life's poor dream depart.
“Leave me not—no, oh no!” at length she cried;
“I reckon not pain, if suffering by thy side.
Glad I will quit these walls and share with thee
Wandering and toil, and crushing poverty;
Love shall make light the heaviest load of ill,
Happy I'll eat want's crust, and bless thee still.
Sink not—despair not—only break the spell
The tempter, to undo thee, brings from hell.
Virtue and honour point, and call thee back;
Follow again their heavenward, shining track:
And soon the night will pass, joy's sun arise,
And misery's desert turn to paradise.”

He smiled, but bitterly, then sadly pressed
The trembling, hopeful pleader to his breast:

For her he fain would live, and cope with fate,
But shame and frenzy burned—'twas now too late.
False reasoning urged, and pride still whispered—die;
His air grew milder, less perturbed his eye;
Hot fever's tint his haggard cheek forsook,
And sadness darkened his despairing look,
As words he uttered, gentle, kind, and low,
Which more than bursts of anger caused her woe.
He bless'd her faithfulness, her patience shown
Through good and ill—the madness, guilt, his own.
He went he knew not whither, felt no fear;
Torture might wait him—more his torture here.
Calmly of all below he heard the knell,
And only mourned to bid one heart—farewell.
There was a clinging to embracing arms,
A wild, long shriek, and darkness o'er her charms
Fell like eclipse upon the beauteous moon;
Her clasping hands relaxed in that deep swoon;
A foot-crushed lily, lay her form of white,
Moveless her limb, and closed her eye's sweet light;
The quivering of her lip declared alone,
Life had not fled with that last piteous groan.

A moment, unresolved, he bent above
The mournful wreck of loveliness and love;

That instant seemed to centre, like sun-rays
Gathered by glass, the dreams of other days :
Memories of scenes where love had borne a part,
And sweet first smiles flashed back upon his heart ;
Flashed back, like gentle music childhood learns,
Like lightning, beautifying while it burns.—
Quit life and her, to hide from present shame,
The crash of ruin, and a tainted name ?
Affection wildly struggled, but its sway,
In that lost, hopeless bosom, soon gave way ;
His heavy burden crushed—o'erwhelmed him now ;
He cower'd, and clenched his hand, and struck his brow,
Then turned, and looked, and turned with wavering air,
The mind would fly, the heart still lingered there.
But frenzy, desperation, as they woke,
Poured flood-like in, and every barrier broke ;
Strong passion, matched with reason, won the goal,
Each fiend of evil urging on his soul.

And where is he?—the wife awakes—no form
Stands by her now ; and hark ! an Autumn storm
Bursts o'er the dwelling, but no sound she hears—
Wildered, and lost, and struggling with her fears.
Poor anguished one ! snatch up—embrace thy child !
It smiles on woe, by happiest thoughts beguiled,

And catches with small hand, in playful glee,
The bright big drops that speak thy agony.
Mercy this day will weep the orphan's fate,
And weep for thee, lone, bowed, and desolate.
Gaming, dire source of wild, delirious bliss,
Hath plunged the loved one in death's dark abyss,
Pity, a Christian burial, e'en denied
The world-scorned dead—the hapless suicide.

END OF BOOK VI.

PLEASURE.



BOOK VII.



PLEASURES EXPERIENCED IN OLD AGE—RETROSPECTION—
COUNTRY LIFE—THE AGED SEAMAN—THE COUNTRY
CLERGYMAN—LEARNING—IMMORTALITY.



WHEN youth's glad Spring hath reigned her fairy
hours,

Descending from her throne, whose steps were flowers,
And sits beside Time's brook, with sadden'd mien,
No more bright loves and graces near her seen;
When manhood's faded Summer heaves a sigh
For vigour past, and droops his burning eye,
And comes that season when the fresh and gay
Yield to the sear and brown of slow decay,

And soberer views, and graver thoughts, engage
The pensive Autumn of our feebler age :
Oh ! think not Pleasure dies !—that life no more
Joy's warming sunshine on the heart can pour ;
That passion, strength, and fire, departing, leave
The weary spirit but to muse and grieve ;
Or thoughts of winter's death, the' approaching tomb,
Darken each hour, and steep the mind in gloom.

No, Autumn wears not frowns, but tranquil smiles,
And still the lovely charms, the sweet beguiles ;
Like sunset waves the yellow'd woods behold !
Alchemic harvest turns the plains to gold ;
The heavens by day spread softer and more still,
By night the moon hangs larger o'er the hill ;
The mellow drooping year, though old, can bless,
And all things breathe a placid thankfulness.
Nature is deeply-grave, yet blandly-meek,
And if a tear-drop stain her paling cheek,
Hope, resignation, make that tear-drop bright,
And turn the seeming sadness to delight.

So smiles for thoughtful age the moral scene,
Wild passion reined, the' experienced heart serene ;
And many a joy, unknown in earlier hour—
Sweet, ripen'd fruit—adorns life's fading bower ;

A richer, softer light fills wisdom's urn,
And heaven's grand glories nearer seem to burn.

For him, low-bowed by years, who never hurled
The shaft of malice in a crime-stained world,
Hath caused no tear, no bosom sought to wring—
What heart-felt bliss doth retrospection bring !
As o'er life's landscape thought delights to run,
Oh ! what a joy to wish no deed undone !
To see but flowers its emerald meads adorn,
To hear glad sounds down mem'ry's gallery borne ;
Voices that bless him from the peopled past,
Where woe he soothed, and light on darkness cast ;
Here retrospection brands not with its flame ;
Here, virtue, is thy triumph—vice, thy shame !

When in life's active walks his toil is o'er,
And Age the bustling mart frequents no more,
The storm, the lightning, that convulsed the sky,
Melted to peace, and bright tranquillity ;
Haply he seeks the far-off rural spot,
Loved in young days—long left, but ne'er forgot.
Where'er he roves, some scene the soul o'erpowers,
Breathing a pleasure linked with vanished hours.
Time hath not chilled emotions, but they start,
Through world-laid snow, more greenly in his heart,

Like the sweet moss that Lapland's reindeer love,
Blooming and fresh, though ice-fields spread above.*
Time hath not changed the forest, rock, or hill,
Exalting, charming—old companions still:
Clouds stoop to kiss yon oft-trod mountain's brow,
The grandeur that once clothed it, robes it now;
Down in the vale the stream's blue windings shine,
Where oft he laved his limbs, or cast his line;
And the huge windmill, that to childhood's eye
Battled with heaven, still sways its arms on high.
In this green wood his feeble form will rest,
Where once, a truant boy, he sought the nest;
As 'neath the broad oak's shade he sits reclined,
His thin locks stirred by summer's fragrant wind,
Thought bears him o'er the graves of long dead years,
Till fresh and bright the past untombed appears;
Again he threads the copse and climbs the tree,
Plucks the brown nut, and shouts in happy glee;
Wealth, kingdoms, nought to him—this hill his throne,
His subjects, birds—the world, the world his own!

The hamlet hums with life; the bench is there,
And bee-loved, bloomy gardens scent the air.

* "The reindeer with their feet will remove the snow in order to feed on the moss beneath, which seems to vegetate the better the deeper the snows that overlay it."—*Travels in Lapland*.

The green churchyard, where yew trees group to weep
O'er simple hearts, long hushed in death's calm sleep;
Yon hoary elms, where rooks yet cluster round
Their mud-formed nests, and caw a slumb'rous sound;
The flint-built church whose walls e'en seem to pray,
Time loth to crush groined arch and pillar gray,
At whose rude, ancient altar, long ago,
He breathed the vows that bound for weal or woe—
These scenes, these well-known objects, touch and melt,
And all which thrilled him once, again is felt;
They voice the past more eloquent than words,
In speech like music or sweet song of birds,
Deep-seated feeling's hallowed founts control,
And pour a happy sadness on the soul.

Nor deem the lowly man bereft of joy,
When sapping years his body's strength destroy;
What though no hoarded gold his coffer fill,
No glittering mansion greet him on the hill,
Nor learning ope for him the wond'rous page,
Nor arts nor science studious thought engage,
He, in his cot, as life's poor sands run low,
Shall taste of joys the wise not always know.
See the hale rustic, when morn's opening eye
Opens his own, and roses prank the sky,

With heart as fresh, walks 'mid his dewy bowers,
And tends his family of infant flowers.
Few souls so tasteless, dull, but pleasure gain
From heaven-sweet flowers that ne'er should bloom in
vain—

Stars of the ground, gay daughters of the air,
That God hath given to make our rude world fair;
Sole relics of lost Eden, all beside
To ruin swept by Time's o'erwhelming tide.
Oh! flowers are seals of rich, diffusive love,
Impressed by angel-fingers from above;
Found in the desert, 'mid the haunts of man,
Spangling Earth's robe when Nature's youth began;
And still their task those fingers ne'er forget—
Busy through countless years, and busy yet;
Still, by their touch renewed, bright flow'rets rise,
Pure, beautiful, and breathing of the skies.

The patriarch watches, with fond, zealous care,
His floral beauties drink the nectar'd air;
To mark their gradual growth—carnations swell,
The rose-bud blow, to prop the drooping bell;
Sweet are the tasks which early morn engage,
And deep their charm for placid, yearning age.
A life-fraught balm those flower-lips breathe around,
A something holy sanctifies the ground;

For do not Nature's vestals worship give
To Nature's God, who bids their beauties live?
Rich odours are their thanks, and meekly there
They lift their brows, or bend their heads in prayer.
This spell the old man feels; within each breast,
Though rude the home, high thoughts, fine fancies
rest;
Learning but draws them forth, as friction keen
Strikes fire from steel that held it, though unseen.

At noon the breezy hill he rambles slow,
Or where, through osier'd banks, cool waters flow;
But chief when evening drops on labour's world
Her peaceful curtain, and day's flag is furled
Along the west's red battlements, where light
Melts into golden smiles to welcome night,
The patriarch feels the frosts of age give way,
And warm around his heart joy's currents play;
Then on a bench, before his blossom'd bower,
He leans at ease, and courts the mellow hour,
Soothed by the weed that charms off moody care,
The white smoke eddying o'er his whiter hair.
Close by, where jasmine-spray thick twines above,
His aged spouse still smiles her changeless love,
Their only care to hush each care to rest,
To cheer each other, make each other blest.

But quick feet now approach, and shouts are heard,
Gay as the notes of morn's cloud-cradled bird,
And, winged with gladness, up the old man's knees,
Ere his slow sight peers down the vista'd trees,
An urchin bounds, whose locks wild, wanton, flow,
Mingling their gold with scanty hairs of snow ;
Gaze in old eyes those eyes, blue, laughing, bright,
Till the dim dimmer look, beside their light.
How warms pleased age life's rosy dawn to see !
Thus fresh green shoots will grace the dying tree.
Part of himself seems that wild, gleesome boy,
A rich beam flashed from setting suns of joy.
He once, like him, saw all things golden-hued,
And half he feels gay childhood's dreams renewed,
Strokes the bold idler's shining, silky hair,
Looks up to heaven, and breathes a wordless prayer,
And while all mirth that reckless face appears,
His struggling feelings gush in blissful tears.

Hark! from yon flame-tipped tower, that springs
between

The elms of brown, and yews of darkest green,
Those bells that sweep the calm with wavelike flow—
A spirit's vespers, holy, sweet, and low :
O'er heath, o'er bosky dell, the echoes swing,
Breathing religion to each listening thing.

The stream's charmed waves seem resting on their shore ;
The arched cascade, white-falling, smoothes its roar ;
The thrush sits mute the pensile boughs among,
Drinking in sounds more sweet than his own song ;
And as to purple fades the lessening light,
They seem to murmur soft—good night! good night!
The soothing chime, the paradisa! hour,
Steal on that little group with magic power ;
The aged pair draw nearer, and their eyes
Are raised instinctive to the solemn skies ;
E'en the wild elf, upon the grandsire's knee,
Looks thoughtful up, and checks his noisy glee.
Each breast is full ; Oh! say not, mourning sage!
No glowing dreams, no pleasures wait on age.

How oft the musing heart hangs fondly o'er
Pursuits renounced, and tasks that charmed of yore!
Habit, long use, have made e'en labour dear ;
We fly the world, yet still that world is near ;
And thoughts of perils, deeds, or sufferings past,
Around the soul a strange enchantment cast.

So the good priest of Galen's generous art,
When eyes grow dim, and vigorous days depart,
Thinks of the cures his patient skill hath made,
Of deaths averted, and of pangs allayed ;

The memory of such deeds a bliss bestows,
Balms his own pains, and soothes his last repose.
He, too, that long hath wandered foreign lands,
Treading snow-covered wastes, or burning sands,
Ravished by wonder's world, when bound at home
By weak and crippling years, no more to roam,
Sits by his little hearth, and muses calm,
On deserts wide, grand hills, and isles of palm,
Smiles at his wanderings closed, his labours o'er,
Or nods, and flies in dreams to Afric's shore,
Leans by old Nile, or treads Thebes' templed plain,
And mounts the sky-topped pyramids again.

Nor feels less pleasure war's bowed gallant son,
His marches finished, and his battles done,
When in the village, to the wondering swains,
He tells of towns besieged, and blood-stained plains,
Speaks of the British chiefs in boastful tone,
Extols their deeds, and sometimes lauds his own :
A hunter's feeble neigh, a banner borne
In peaceful hands, a lonely trumpet-horn,
Rouse in his breast the dreams of prouder days,
And fan his long-cooled valour to a blaze.
But most the aged seaman owns the spell,
Breathing from scenes long since he bade farewell ;

His life upon the world of waters passed,
His love for Ocean thrills him to the last.

Flowers wreathed the cot, and poplars tower'd on high,
Where the old sailor laid him down to die.
Scarr'd, reft of limbs, that patriarch of the wave
Must find at last a calm and bloodless grave ;
Yet still his heart life's ruling passion warms,
He talks of nought but booming guns and storms ;
And still he cries—" Mine Ocean-home for me !
There let me die—Oh ! take me to the sea !"—
The beach is far, and motion and chill air
May task too much life's sinking flame to bear :
They place before his couch a tiny bark,
And long he views that fair-constructed ark ;
His practised eye o'er mast, sail, cordage, runs,
Till fancy hears his " Dreadnought's " rolling guns.
He tires—that mimic ship can charm no more ;
Again he cries—" Oh ! bear me to the shore !"

They press unto his ear the spiral shell,
Where, soft and strange, low ocean-echoes dwell :
He hears the Sea-nymphs murmur in their caves,
The long, long dash of distant weltering waves ;
But soon those fancies pass ; he feels no spray,
No freshening breezes 'round his temples play :

Nought will console him ; still his dim eyes weep,
And still he moans—"Oh! bear me to the deep!"

They grant his wish, and slowly seek the strand,
And place his litter on the golden sand.
Oh! the wild joy that thrills the veteran's soul,
As living waves once more before him roll!
As breezes sweep, and sea-birds cleave the sky,
And white-winged barks are dashing gaily by!
His eyes, late dim, resume their wonted ray,
And Death holds back, as doubtful of his prey.
See, as Eve's lips to crimson kiss the rocks,
And the fresh sea-wind stirs his silvery locks,
How pleased he counts each shoreward-dashing wave,
Drinking wild music from each answering cave,
While to the deep the' expiring hero cries,
Like Afric's bird, that sings its dirge and dies:—

"Welcome, familiar friend! thou glorious Sea!
No child its parent loves, as I love thee.
On thy rough-nursing breast my years have past,
Tost on thy foam, and wafted by thy blast.
How mean are mountains, and how tame are vales,
To thy vast surge upheaved by rushing gales!
Life ebbs away; and must I never more
Plough thy wild plains, or hear thy solemn roar?

Yes, this unfettered spirit still shall glide,
In airy rapture, o'er thy boundless tide,
Live in thy depths, and through thy caverns sweep,
And all its memories, all its fondness keep ;
My music still shall be thy stormy roll,
Thy coral caves the palace of my soul."

Words ceased to flow ; his pale lips murmured yet ;
He watched day's gold-rimmed orb, as slow it set :
The lessening beam fell quivering on his brow,
And lit the cheek stern death was icing now ;
His only arm dropp'd nerveless by his side,
Once more he murmured—"Glorious sea!" and died.

When virtue, toiling long to chase woe's sigh,
And lead men's thoughts from earth to seats on high,
Goes down the shadowy vale of closing years,
How calm, how blest, life's hopeful Eve appears !
Thrice happy Pastor! 'round his tranquil way,
No restless passions, fiery meteors, play,
But, softly-bright, time gathers on his head
All the sweet rays that Memory loves to shed,
And pleasures, pure as lofty, warm his breast,
Foretaste of Heaven's own bliss, and hallow'd rest.

Fancy delights in some hushed rural scene
To trace his course, as Nature's self serene ;

His hours not dull, though undisturbed they flow,
He feels no sorrow, save at crime and woe;
His humble flock demands his cheerful care,
For them he toils, for them ascends his prayer;
His heart to sympathy's deep music true,
With them he weeps, with them rejoices too.
Though rare again his faltering voice may sound
In yon old church, with reverend ivies bound,
Feelings of placid joy his bosom swell,
As up the valley swings the sabbath-bell.
Through life's long course, that welcome bell hath made
Beloved and holy solitude's deep shade;
Were all rich strains Art ever poured to meet
In that lone spot, to him they'd sound less sweet;
Scarce can he dream of harmonies above,
Without that hallow'd bell of prayer and love.
See! as the sun shines warm, and each young flower
Breathes sweeter scents, as conscious of the hour,
And birds from shade-cool woods pipe softer song,
And, tenderer toned, the runnel hymns along,
The Pastor from his small trim garden wends,
And, staff-supported, down the valley bends.
A moment pausing by the rustic stile,
He views the smiling landscape with a smile,
Mourns not to think so soon his aged eye
Must close on flower-decked earth, and sun-bright'
sky,

But blesses God, whose laws can ne'er be wrong,
His foot hath trod this beauteous world so long.

Slow to the ancient church he paces now,
Where bends in rev'rence many a rugged brow,
Treads the green path with humble tombstones lined,
And turns on all a glance devoutly kind.
In that calm face love's freshest spirit beams,
That silvery head a crown of glory seems.
The simple rustic, heart all fervour, prays
Heaven may support him, and prolong his days;
The mother blesses him in accents mild;
Curtseys aside the bright-haired, rosy child;
Each on the pastor fixes loving eyes,
While his bland look, one radiant smile, replies.
How beats his heart, how warmly feelings glow,
As in his desk once more, in robe of snow,
He reads the page he ne'er can read too oft,
His voice now stealing 'round in murmurs soft,
Now raised, a wakening trumpet, spirit's light
Illuming eyes that soon must close in night.
A moment, age and frailty seem forgot,
His heart all energy in that bless'd spot;
While leading others through our world of pain,
He feels himself more near heaven's bright domain;

Glowing already with 'seraphic love,
His frame below, his raptured soul above.

Hail! Thought! pale hermit, with the down-bent eye,
And heaven's fair child, calm-browed Philosophy!
Hail! Learning! laying bare each hidden thing,
Searching truth's fields on bold unwearied wing!
Ye fly not Age, but haunt his pensive way,
And cheer with noblest views his wintry day;
He feels for you 'tis rapture yet to live,
Ye pour in bliss the senses ne'er can give,
And with a grave, deep eloquence, prepare
The spirit to depart a world of care,
Pointing with shining wand to spheres unseen,
And bridging, with strong faith, the gulph between.

Dark creed, that would pronounce all wisdom gained
By patient toil, all learning here obtained,
Lost to the naked soul when quitting earth—
Experience, bright acquirements, nothing worth!
Is this thy dream? Then why attempt to soar?
Why gem the mind with learning's priceless ore?
Why strive to climb truth's mountain?—just as well
In gloomy error's sunless valley dwell;
Scarce worth the winning, that which cannot stay,
Dogmed, at death's fatal touch, to melt away.

If equal placed upon the future stage,
The' unlettered peasant and the god-like sage,
Then lofty Wisdom cast ye from her throne !
Then let the dark unknown be still unknown !
Grovel through life, close science' radiant door,
And mind's august achievements boast no more.

Awake ! believe !—lo ! memory's flower shall bloom
Uncrushed by death—sweet blossom of the tomb !
For grant mind's essence undestroyed above,
And grant dear forms are recognised by love—
Shall we not treasure still the thoughts, the dreams,
The knowledge of grand truths, though partial gleams,
That bade our hearts with pride and triumph glow,
And crowned with bliss our weary march below ?
Here one small fold of learning's veil we raised,
Here on great Nature's face but darkly gazed,
Yet 'twas not vain such dawning beams were given,
Preparing mind for glory's day in heaven ;
Not vain a Socrates man's duties showed,
Or with transcendent thought a Plato glowed ;
Not vain that Milton swept his lofty shell,
Or Dante visioned paradise and hell ;
Or Herschel scanned, with space-pervading eye,
The God-poised worlds that live along the sky.

The powers of soul thus sown in mortal years,
Still grow and ripen in celestial spheres.
The sage to higher, holier dreams shall cling,
The poet's harp with grander music ring;
And he who dimly viewed, remote, confined,
The blaze of worlds, o'erwhelming sense and mind,
Shall launch with added bliss on shoreless space,
And heaven's long-curtained secrets brightly trace,
Pierce every depth where wondrous life is found,
And sweep the star-paved universe around.

Oh, yes! the loftiest pleasure man can know,
When tottering graveward, feeble, faint, and slow,
Springs from the thought, that while dull earth may claim
The spirit's cast-off shell, the worn-out frame,
Mind will arise, fire-wing'd, and spurn decay,
And through those skies of wonder urge its way;
The very hope of passing endless years
'Mid worlds of beauty, angels our compeers,
From glory to new glory wafted there,
Circled by all things bright, august, and fair,
May well inspire us, while we bend the knee,
And pour our burning thanks, O God! to thee.

Yet gloomy doubt perturbeth many a breast;
From dust we sprang, is dust our final rest?

What feels, and hopes, and fain would heavenward
spring,

Swept to black night by dire destruction's wing?

Do Nature's laws, to anxious mind and eye,

Solve the great problem—man shall never die?

If wondrous spirit, a mere shade, a dream,

Goes darkly out, with life's extinguished beam;

If souls must sleep grave-prison'd, never more

To think, remember, triumph, or adore,

Then an enigma dread, a more than curse

Rests on the face of all God's universe;

Then He, whose power and love no limit know,

Doth seem that power, love, mercy to forego,

Doth grant us feelings, intellect in vain;

Shivered for ever mind's wide-circling chain;

Fruitless the past, with all its hopes, joys, fears;

Fruitless the present, fruitless coming years.

Aye! when the last lorn mortal walks our globe,

And, like a winding-sheet, Destruction's robe

Wraps Nature's corpse, and vaunting, kingly Death

Hath blasted all, save him, with fiery breath;

Then may he kneel, and, trembling, ask why God,

Age after age, called millions from the sod,

To dash them back to still primeval night,

And quench, in dreary Nothing, Being's light?

If nought survive throughout Creation's plan,
As well an emmet lived as god-like man ;
As well crime, passion, hold their fierce career,
As virtue build her starry palace here ;
No punishment, no just reward for those
On whom thy shades, Annihilation ! close.
What, too, were Earth, the beautiful, the grand,
E'en if renewed by God's creative hand,
Its cherished races gone, no soul to rise
Above that turf where all its glory lies ?
A mighty tombstone placed in fields of air,
Inscribed with one dread epitaph—despair !

Oh ! from me snatch the hope of passing o'er
The bridge of death, to Being's brighter shore !
Of mounting from my ashes, when the fire
The mortal phoenix fans, shall all expire !
Then would I rove a brute, or sigh to be
The simplest bird that carols on a tree ;
An insect, worm, aught, aught but reasoning man,
So I might fly dread thought's terrific ban ;
For Nature's tribes no torturing dreams oppress,
Of ruthless fate, and cold, blank nothingness :
Happier than he who boasts mind's subtile power,
They ask no life beyond the fleeting hour,

Mourn not the past, no links to make it dear,
Nor shrink nor shudder with prospective fear;
A heaven to them each vale, each grassy hill,
Blest while they crop the blade or quaff the rill;
And when death comes, their sense no terrors steep—
Passing to calm oblivion, as to sleep.

Man, reft of soul, thus darkly sinks below
The favoured brute—supreme alone in woe;
The world's great masterpiece—Creation's king,
Feeling his curse, a doomed, an abject thing;
Treasuring up knowledge only for the grave,
And harbouring wishes Nature vainly gave;
Panting eternal years in bliss to spend,
Yet borne each moment nearer to his end,
His soarings folly, reason's voice a knell,
His gifts a mock'ry, and his hopes a hell.

But cheer thee, Man! nor in dejection bow;
Read other fate on Mercy's smiling brow:
Oh! trust heaven's seers of old! around thee gaze,
See Deity through all Creation blaze!
His voice doth speak the thunder, yet the gale
Wafts it in whispers down the lilled vale;
His eye doth flash the lightning, yet it glows
In yon mild beam that warms the fragile rose.

Yes, through unconscious Matter's vast domain,
Power, glory, love, and errless wisdom reign;
Nought there doth perish; wide Creation sees
An endless round of happiest harmonies:
Life weds stern death; tree, flower, but sink to rise,
And laugh again in beauty on the skies;
Spring bounds revived from Winter's spectral arms;
No dissolution waits quick Nature's charms;
The sun that thinks not, feels not, knows not God,
Hath sumless ages cheered the grateful sod,
And still will blaze, while time's long current streams,
Unbowed his strength, unshorn his golden beams:
Shall, then, to spirit only God appear
Arrayed in wrath, unmerciful, severe?
Preserving clay, while that which soareth high
O'er all material things, He dooms to die?
The meanest, lowest, blest with loftiest dower,
Matter unending years—the soul an hour?
Reason cries "No!" and "No!" truth's trumpet
 sounds,
And Nature answers "No!" through all her bounds.

Oh! matchless work of God! nought science shows,
'Mid all the marvels earth's wide scenes disclose,
'Mid all heaven's splendours, bidding hearts aspire,
System on system, spangling space with fire;

Nought noble, glorious, as ethereal mind,
Where food for wonder angels e'en might find.
This subtile mystery never grasped by sense,
This viewless lightning of intelligence,
Proud mind hath powers that mock the feebler frame,
Though darkly prison'd its heaven-pointing flame.
From its small cell, it looks abroad to trace
Each world-wide charm on Nature's varied face,
Invents, discovers, gives frail man to rule
All life below, and teach in wisdom's school.
Mind scans the ant, the flow'ret of the vale,
And weighs the world in science' errless scale ;
Follows suns, planets, as they burn and roll,
And solves the laws that bind the mighty whole,
Grasps the dark gone, and leaps the gulf sublime,
Parting the "now" from forward-stretching time,
Then mounts triumphant o'er death's tomb—the
sod,
To dream of Heaven, and comprehend a God.

Oh! shall this mind, with all its giant powers,
Not half evolved in life's brief, torpid hours—
Mind, like an eagle, higher and more high
Pluming its course up truth's illumin'd sky—
Shall this proud essence, with the dying clay,
Its home an hour, dissolve and sink away ?

Pass by God's law, while globes still roll in light,
To blank oblivion, sempiternal night ?
Creation purposeless, the Sovereign skies
Unjust, unpitying, cruel, and unwise ;
As if the' Unchangeable changed love to hate,
Peopling all worlds to make worlds desolate—
Reason cries, "No!" and "No!" truth's trumpet sounds,
And Nature answers "No!" through all her bounds.

See! Worth, in rags, the gorgeous city roams,
Starving in plenty, homeless 'mid glad homes!
While pampered Pride flaunts on, with icy sneer,
Heaven's scorner crowned with heaven's chief blessings
here.

Hark! Virtue's sigh o'er cherished hopes laid low,
Countless her trials, Fortune still her foe ;
Then see how gifts of men, and smiles of fate,
Follow through life the gay-soul'd reprobate :
All he doth touch turns gold, the harsh made sweet ;
Where'er he moves, flowers seem to kiss his feet.
The tyrant triumphs, while his victim sighs,
A Borgia revels, and a Sidney dies ;
A Timur smiles, soothed, flattered by his horde,
While half the East expires beneath his sword.
Oh! where, great God! thy just, impartial sway,
No life to come—no future reckoning-day,

When good shall balance ill, Crime cease to rear
His boastful front, and Virtue wipe her tear?

Scan the wide earth ; the unlettered and the learned,
The white man courted, and the sable spurned ;
The poor lone monk at penance in his cell,
The Moslem bowed by Zemzem's holy well ;
The wild free savage scouring hill and plain ;
Whate'er their creeds, their dreams of joy and pain,
One instinct still, unchanging, sways their souls,
Whose power nor time nor error's night controls—
Instinct surpassing reason—Godhead gave—
Belief of loftier life to crown the grave!

Thus the schooled Greek his fair Elysium drew—
Meads gay with flowers, and transports ever new ;
Trimmed in the tomb the lamp of odorous fire,
Type of soul's light that never shall expire :
Thus, too, wild Arabs lay, with reverend hand,
Their honoured chieftain in his bed of sand,
Place the sweet date, his slaughtered camel there,
Deeming the faithful brute his lot will share,
And, swift as fire-winged comet climbs the skies,
Mount with his charge to sun-bright paradise.
Go, search far Isles that gem the Southern Sea,
E'en there rude man, while being, hopes to be ;

Oh! not from earth's warm glories shall he pass,
Like clouds that melt, or dew that beads the grass ;
But fancy tells him, when his eyes shall close
On all that pains him now, his toils and woes,
His guardian Genius, in a wing'd canoe,
Shall waft him swift o'er calmest waves of blue,
To some fair Isle beneath Morn's silver star,
Brighter than lands he leaves, and happier far ;
Where hunger, thirst, and wars molest no more,
And sweetest flowers fringe thick the mossy shore ;
Where mangos, milky cocoàs, never fail,
And gorgeous humming-birds haunt every vale,
While music, ease, and endless love impart
A heaven of rapture to his grateful heart.*

Yes, all aspire, all crave eternal days,
And deep the bliss those golden visions raise.
Brutes, slaves to sense, no skyward soarings own,
No future ask—that prayer is man's alone :
Brutes, too, unchanged remain, as ages roll,
But knows no rest his active, burning soul ;

* The natives of the Friendly Islands are said firmly to cherish the belief of the soul's immortality. On its leaving the body, they affirm, it is borne away in a canoe to a far distant land, named Dubludda, beautiful beyond conception, and where it will wander in perfect freedom, and never again experience death.—*Voyage to the South Sea.*

Urged by some call, still forward he must strain,
More wisdom, power to grasp, more bliss to gain.
E'en discontent, where Virtue evil sees—
Dark discontent, engendering agonies,
Proclaims a spirit struggling through the gloom,
Spurning the dust, and meant for loftier doom.
The present he o'ervaults—'tis nought to him,
Waiting the future, looming through the dim ;
There bliss is palaced—there his eager sight
Feeds on the fancied beautiful and bright.
This ceaseless march, these restless throbbings, show
Some goal awaits his course ne'er reached below ;
For far perfection, still he breathes the sigh,
The flower that blossoms—only in the sky.

Pilgrim of earth ! then walk life's path serene,
Ill is the chrysalis of good unseen ;
Thy Maker's laws extol, His wisdom bless,
What thou deem'st woe is embryo happiness.
Not vain past deeds, not wasted vanished years,
Light won from smiles, and lessons learnt from tears.
Man, as the scale of being he ascends,
From mortal to immortal upward tends ;
Thus should pale death no dread, but pleasure give,
Assured, though dying, we but die to live ;

That body shall be granted like our own,
Save in the' ethereal beauty round it thrown ;
No frailty, change, but ever young and fair,
A germ of self-support still doomed to bear.
In radiance shall we move, like that blest throng
Who wing heaven's depths, and fill its courts with song;
An everlasting substance pure as bright,
A deathless flame from One grand fount of light ;
In grasping truths, all soul,—in feeling, heart,
Forming love-unions time shall never part,
Empowered the world-filled infinite to roam,
The stars our beacons, and the sky our home.

THE END.



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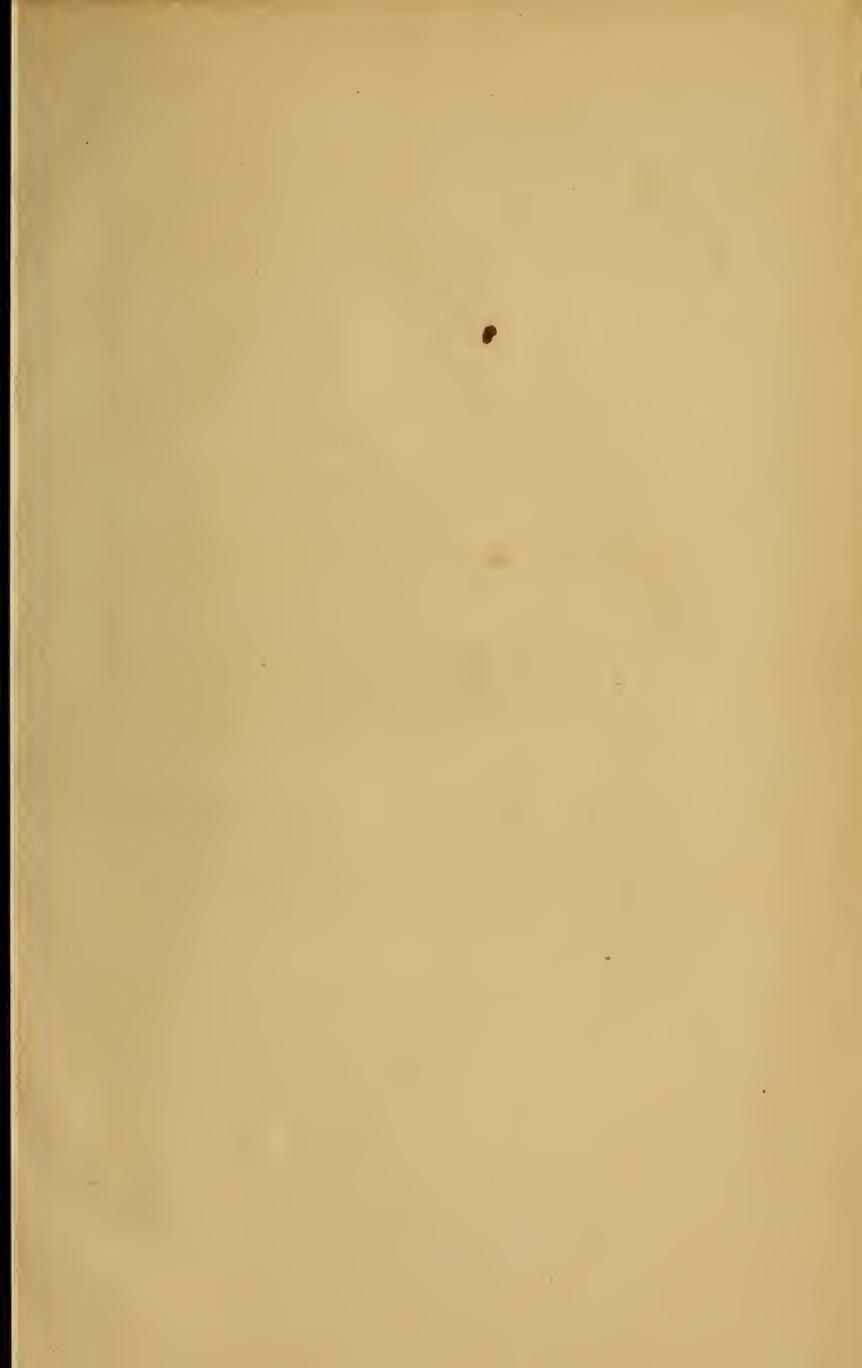
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